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Drugs
Opium

THE INDIAN OPIUM TRADE.

THE DEBATE

IN

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

ON THE RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY

SIR JOSEPH W. PEASE, BART., M.P.

FRIDAY, 24TH MAY, 1895.

EXTRACTED FROM
"THE AUTHORISED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

WITH DIVISION LIST AND NOTES ; ALSO THE REPLY OF MR. H. J. WILSON, M.P.,
TO THE RIGHT HON. H. H. FOWLER, DELIVERED AT WESTMINSTER TOWN
HALL, FRIDAY, 31ST MAY, 1895.

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On the Motion that Mr. SPEAKER do leave the Chair,

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) rose to call attention to the Report of the Royal Commission on Opium; and to move—

“That this House, having had before it its Resolution of the 30th June 1893, pressing on the Government of India to continue their policy of greatly diminishing the cultivation of the poppy and the production and sale of Opium, and having had presented to it the Report of the Royal Commission, appointed 2nd September 1893, to inquire into various matters connected with the cultivation of the poppy in India, is of opinion that the system by which the Indian Opium Revenue is raised is morally indefensible, and would urge upon the Indian Government that they should cease to grant licences for the cultivation of the poppy and sale of Opium in British India, except to supply the legitimate demand for medicinal purposes, and that they should at the same time take measures to arrest the transit of Malwa Opium through British territory.”

He admitted that it was somewhat inconvenient on a Friday Evening to bring before the House a subject of such importance as that which he brought before it this evening. But he felt that he must seize the earliest possible opportunity of endeavouring in the House to contradict what had been mentioned in so many journals of the day—namely, the idea that the Commission which had sat on the opium question in India had terminated for ever the question of trade in opium, that it met the views of those who had been opposed to this trade, and for many years fought against its continuance in our Indian Empire. They still held that the system by which this revenue was raised was morally indefensible. He asserted, moreover, that the Report confirmed the view that this trade was morally indefensible, and that the Commission proposed action having that proposition in view.

HOW THE COMMISSION WAS APPOINTED.

In 1893 the hon. Member for West Waterford (Mr. Webb) moved for a Royal Commission—(1) To report on the possibilities of retrenchment in India; (2) on the development of its resources; and (3) what temporary aid India would require consequent upon putting down the poppy cultivation except for medicinal purposes. A Commission was now appointed to look into the finances of the Indian Empire; and they could not look into that question without also looking at the other two points—retrenchment of expenditure and the development of the resources of India. They had, therefore, got now, as nearly as possible, back to the position in which his hon. Friend left it, *minus* the opium question. It was a singular fact that the hon. Member for North Bedfordshire (Mr. George Russell), then Under Secretary of State for India, placed resolutions on the Paper; but the whole question was taken out of the hands of the Under Secretary by the right hon. Member for Midlothian, whose perfervid speech carried the House. The anti-opium party in the House objected to that Commission. They thought that the moral question had already been settled by the House in 1891; that there was ample evidence from China, and from India in the Blue Book of Lord Cross, and that there was no occasion for further inquiry into this matter in India. The great source of revenue was not in India itself, where it was comparatively small, but 90 per cent. of the whole of the Indian revenue was derived from trade with China and the Straits Settlements, especially with Singapore. But the Indian Government got their own Commission—composed of Lord Brassey, chairman; Sir James Lyall and Mr. Fanshawe, Indian officials; Sir W. Roberts, a physician; Mr. Mowbray, M.P., South-east Lancashire, who voted against the anti-opium party in 1891; the Maharaja of Darbhanga (Sir Lakshmeshwar Singh) and Mr. Haridas Velharidas, natives of India; Mr. Arthur Pease, and Mr. Henry J. Wilson, M.P. On the appointment of the two last alone was he consulted.

NOT A FAIR INQUIRY.

It was not the free, fair inquiry that he understood Lord Kimberley to promise. Having obtained their Commission, the Government proceeded to “dry-nurse” it. They provided it with three consecutive secretaries, Sir C. Bernard (temporary), Mr. Hewitt, and Mr. Baines, all in their pay. It proceeded in its inquiry more like an excursion party. There were five ladies and the usual retinue of Indian servants. At Calcutta all lived at the Residency except Mr. Wilson; a review of troops was held, and a nautch dance was provided to indoctrinate these gentlemen, who had come on a moral inquiry, into the higher tone of Indian morals! His hon. Friend the Member for Holmfirth was absent on that occasion. A highly competent official (Mr. Dane) was appointed to take charge of the Commission. The evidence was collated and arranged, and that which was not wanted was declined. The collectors of evidence to be given on the other side were watched by the police. The witnesses were drilled. The evidence of the Commission was collected by Mr. Dane, and a large quantity of it passed from other Governments through the hands of the Calcutta Government. The anti-opium section was not aided to bring up a single witness. The whole power and the money of the Indian Government were against the few subscribers of the anti-opium movement. He was much struck by the manner and the style—the Old Bailey style (he said it without offence)—of Sir James Lyall, in putting his interrogations. Sir James Lyall’s questions were entirely directed to preserving the revenue, and they were put in a tone that would not have been tolerated on a Committee or Commission in this country. He at once expostulated with Lord Kimberley, and pointed out to him that, instead of a fair and free inquiry, it was the whole force of the Indian Government against the Christian Churches at home. No fair man who read that evidence and report but must be struck by the character of the pro-opium evidence—its want of experience, its want of facts, its hearsay tone and character. “We have heard,” “We suppose,” “We believe,” “long custom and habit,” were all favourite phrases.

CHARACTER OF THE REPORT.

The extracts were garbled, partial, and unfair. This was diffused through nearly every paragraph of the Report; there was no grasp, and there was little or no positive recommendation, except on opium smoking. The Commission thought that the "use should be restricted," but they added that they had not time to say in what manner it should be restricted. The Commissioners had been at home one year before this Report was laid before Parliament, and still there had not been time to come to a conclusion. With regard to China, they laid aside the whole of the China question, which, after all, was not committed to them in the references, by saying that China would supply herself if we did not; therefore they made no proposal. No one could look at the Report without seeing who drew it up and for what purpose. The Government of India thanked the Commission for their trouble in strengthening the hands of the Government. The Commission also thanked the two paid officers who were their secretaries for having drafted their Report. No doubt the secretaries ought to have drafted the Report, but ought they to have been in the pay of the Indian Government, or ought they not rather to have been independent secretaries? He asserted that the Report was settled in the India Office. Was that a fair way of conducting the Commission? The officers of the Commission ought to have been independent officers. They did not wait, before issuing their Report, till the report of the Maharaja of Darbhanga had arrived. Did they know it was coming? The Maharaja of Darbhanga, who was on the Commission and whose report was only circulated a few days ago, stated that he would put down opium smoking at once by law, that he would label every piece of opium as "poison," and that he would mark on packages containing it the minimum dose which was likely to prove fatal. The paid officers of the Indian Government occupied 240 pages out of 392 of the Report itself.

SIR ANDREW SCOBLE (Hackney, Central): Sir James Lyall is not a paid officer of the Indian Government.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE replied that Sir J. Lyall was in receipt of a pension

from the Indian Government. Continuing, he said, that the grossly partisan Report occupied 240 pages, while the actual and independent portion covered only 126 pages. 130 medical men were examined. Of these, 82 were official, 14 missionary, and 34 independent. Of the officials, 44 were favourable, 18 indifferent, and 20 unfavourable. All the missionaries were unfavourable to the use of opium, half the independent medical men—17 out of 34—and 20 officials. There were thus 57 medical men on the one side, against 51 on the other.

THE REPORT ON BURMA.

A sample of the onesidedness was shown in the report dealing with Burma (p. 92). The Commission said:—

"We have no suggestions to make in detail as to the administration of the measures sanctioned by the Government of India in November 1893, and we recommend that they be maintained unaltered till they are fairly tested by experience."

Sir Charles Aitchison reported in 1880. The Indian Government held out till 1893. Sir Charles said* :—

"Here the question is not one of better or worse morality, but of the salvation of a whole people from a vice which we have introduced among them, and from ruin, which it is to a great extent in our power to retard, if not prevent. . . . There is no time here for experiments if the people are to be saved."

The Indian Government still retarded Sir Charles Aitchison's recommendations, and this Commission called it, in fact, a mere experiment.

THE DRUGGING OF INFANTS DEFENDED.

Another example was as to the drugging of infants (p. 16). The arguments put forward in support of the practice were that it was used to prevent diarrhœa, to correct the mother's milk, and to keep the child quiet.

"It is impossible to believe that this custom should have been handed down for many centuries amongst a people whose general fondness for their children is well known, if it were as injurious as some witnesses seem to think."

* "Opium British Burma, 1881," No. 266, pp. 4, 5.

The evidence as to the drugging of infants was as follows* :—

“ Surgeon Lieut-Col. Hendley put in summaries of replies from 55 persons at Jeyapore, on the use of opium. The answers referring to children conclude: ‘ Baneful custom, as it causes atrophy, constipation, fever, etc. The principal cause of infantile mortality here.’ Witness adds, ‘ The opinions of all are much the same.’ In the municipal report of Lucknow for 1891, Dr. Cleghorn wrote, ‘ Another cause of mortality among children is the almost universal practice of giving infants opium.’ Dr. Huntly states, ‘ I know that I have come across many deaths in children owing to an overdose of opium, and still more die from the continuance of the habit. Within a radius of half-a-mile of Jodhpore hospital I certainly can produce 20 cases.’ Miss Rose Greenfield, of the Charlotte Hospital, Ludhiana, said, ‘ Many children’s lives are lost just by an overdose of opium.’ She had no doubt a certain number of girls are still killed by opium intentionally. Miss Carlton, M.D., definitely confirmed this. A native witness stated ‘ girls are more generally drugged than boys.’ Surgeon Lieut-Col. Mayne said, ‘ I continually saw children given opium, and I have seen some deaths among them from its injudicious use.’ ”

THE REAL CHARACTER OF THE DRUG.

Throughout its inquiries the Commission seemed to have forgotten the real character of the drug. In 1843, Lord Shaftesbury took the opinion of 27 of the most eminent medical men in London, who described the pernicious consequences of the opium habit as destroying the healthy habit of the digestive organs. There was also the testimony of upwards of 5,000 medical men of the present day, many of them eminent in their profession, including 14 professors of *materia medica*, 23 doctors who had practised in India and 12 in China, stating distinctly the deleterious effects of the drug. A book entitled “ Rudiments of Sanitation for Indian Schools,” edited by Surgeon-Captain Patrick Hehir, M.D., laid down the pernicious consequences of the opium habit and the necessity of at once counteracting it, even at the expense of great physical suffering for the time, and it ended with the moral to the Indian children not to touch opium. He would go as fast as he could through

the great Indian points. They were told that the drug was used as a prophylactic and as a febrifuge; that it was essential to the cultivator; that it was difficult to arrange matters with the native states; and that our native soldiers required it. What was the character of opium? Gloss it over as they liked, it was a poisonous drug. The great difference between alcohol and opium was this: Thousands took beer, wine, and spirits—took alcohol one day, but did not, perhaps, touch it the next; took it in fact in moderation; whereas an opium smoker or eater must have it, or he failed in his daily task; and the evidence was conclusive that in almost every case he must have more and more of the drug. No one objected to the use of opium purely as a drug.

THE FEBRIFUGE THEORY.

As to the allegations that opium was a prophylactic and a febrifuge, Rai Lal Madhub Mookerjee, Bahadur, L.M.S., graduate in medicine and surgery, president of Calcutta Medical School, lecturer on ophthalmic medicine, and for some time in Government employ, examined as to its being a prophylactic, stated (Q. 8824):—

“ It is to my mind a new theory. . . . It is not a theory I ever heard of while I was a student of medicine, or as a practitioner,”

and added (Q. 8830)—

“ I do not think it is a remedy in fever.”

Moreover, a memorandum of the Government of Madras* was as follows :—

“ The Government is aware that the opium traffic is carefully watched by the agents and their assistants, and that, so far from ‘ teaching the people to rely on opium as a febrifuge,’ we are doing all we can to gradually wean them from their hereditary habit of using it on all occasions.”

Dr. J. R. Wallace, M.D., who had had 14 years’ experience in Calcutta, both in Government service and private practice, said (Q. 4710):—

“ I have never seen or heard of any physician in Calcutta or elsewhere who prescribes the use

* “ The Opium Habit in the East : A Study of the Evidence given to the Royal Commission on Opium, 1893-94, by Joshua Rowntree,” p. 49.

* Blue Book : “ Consumption of Opium in India,” 1892, p. 52.

of opium for the prevention or cure of malarial fever. I have recently read of the good effect of opium in preventing and even curing malarial fever. I have given the theory a fair and honest trial during the past 10 or 12 months, and I am thoroughly convinced that beyond relieving the bodily pains and aches of malarial fever, it in no way prevents or shortens its paroxysms. I firmly believe that the action of opium in malarial disorders, in which there is such a strong tendency to congestion of the liver, spleen, and kidneys, is not only distinctly contra-indicated, but its administration in many such cases would be undoubtedly harmful." "I have frequently found serious complications follow the use of opium when given as a sedative, in cases where the liver had undergone inflammatory or degenerative change from any cause. I base this opinion further upon the teaching and practice of many able and experienced Indian physicians, such men as Norman Chevers, David B. Smith, Coates, Harvey, and McConnell, men whose lectures and practice I have attended and seen, and from whom I never heard a word of commendation for the use of opium in malarial fever; men who, as far as my recollection serves me, have always condemned the use of opium in congested conditions of the liver—a condition which, sooner or later, complicates every case of malarial fever."

IS THE POPPY CROP PROFITABLE?

Then as to the cultivation and character of the opium crop and its necessity to the cultivator. It was universally admitted throughout the Blue Books on the "Moral and Material Progress of India," that the cultivation of the poppy was being reduced on account of other crops turning the poppy out of the market. It was giving place to better paying crops. From the Report on the "Moral and Material Progress of India," page 89, which was laid on the Table of the House of Commons in May 1892, he quoted:—

"It is reported that cultivators of opium have lost heart, after experiencing three bad seasons in succession; that 'new cultivators are gradually withdrawing from the industry, while there is a tendency on the part of older cultivators to lessen the poppy area cultivated by them in favour of the more robust and less precarious cereals.' The Behar opium agent adds that 'the opium department have difficulty in maintaining their position; they cannot drop cultivation at will without losing it permanently.'"

The problem was how to keep the land in poppy cultivation, and that was the

difficulty of the Government in 1891. In 1894, in a copy of the Resolution of the Indian Revenue Department, it was stated that—

"the decrease in the area of poppy cultivation is accounted for by the following reasons: (1) the policy of the Government not to take any measures for increasing the area of cultivation; (2) a series of bad seasons, which has disheartened the opium cultivators; and (3) the competition of other crops."

The end of these difficulties was that the Indian Government, since the Commission left India, in order to produce a crop at all, had to make an additional advance of 20 per cent.—i.e., from 5 to 6 rupees per seer, or at the rate of 10s. 6d. per acre, to the cultivator. While it was confessed that in many places the production of the poppy was an advantage to the cultivator, yet there was perfectly clear evidence to show that in other places the crop was being rapidly superseded by crops of other articles far more beneficial to humanity; and he could not help thinking that if the Government of India would turn their attention less to the production of opium and more to that of other crops, it would be to the benefit of the cultivator and mankind at large.

THE NATIVE STATES.

The next point was the argument that the cultivation of the poppy was required by the native States. Now the number of chests from those States had gradually fallen away since 1886. In 1886-7 the number of chests on which duty was paid was 39,745, and in 1894-5 they fell to 27,750. Thus, in spite of all the encouragement that had been given to the native States, the quantity of opium that passed out of them for duty fell by 33 per cent. Baroda, which used to send 2,000 chests, now sends no opium at all. But granting for a moment that the native States went on with the cultivation of the poppy, he admitted that the Government was not responsible for the deeds of those States to the same extent as for those of India proper. The Government were able to leave the States to take their own course,

but if, by the Government giving up the cultivation, the demand and price of the opium of the native States were increased, they could restrain the increase as at present by raising the transit duties. The Indian Government reduced them from 700 rupees to 600 rupees, and had now again raised them to 650, where they could keep them with all justice to the native States if they desired to wash their own hands of the trade.

THE SOLDIER ARGUMENT.

Another argument on this question (what was termed the soldier argument) was that opium was essential to the native soldier—but it altogether failed before the Commission. The evidence showed that there were no fewer than 23 native regiments—16 regiments of the Bengal Infantry, 5 of the Punjab Infantry, and 2 of the Sikh Infantry—which never touched opium at all, and in those in which it was taken the practice was condemned, and its effects were shown to be prejudicial both morally and physically.

"In the 15th Bengal Infantry each man took opium with him according to his requirements; in the 23rd Bengal Infantry three pounds taken up by the Commissariat Department sufficed for two years; in the 32nd Bengal Infantry one pound was taken regimentally, to be issued when ordered, but was brought back unused; and in the 3rd Sikh Infantry a small quantity was taken up by the regimental chowdhri for use if required, but was brought back untouched. Major-General Sir Robert Low, who held the important military command of the Oudh district, said that the native troops under him were both Hindus and Mahomedans living in the North-West Provinces. The opening questions and replies 14,108 to 14,112 ran as follows:—'As a rule are these men opium-eaters?' 'No.' 'I presume there are exceptions in almost every regiment?' 'Yes.' 'What is the highest number of opium-eaters reported in any one regiment under your command?' 'Twenty.' 'And the lowest?' 'Two, that is in the Ghoorka regiment.' 'Is there any regiment in which none are reported?' 'There is one.' General Low said when he was in the 13th Bengal Lancers twelve years ago all the Sikhs took opium habitually in small quantities. The exact amounts he could not remember. Referring to a servant of his who had taken opium for a long time, the General said:—'I did not know that he used it to excess until up

in the hills we found ourselves without it. Then he became perfectly useless, and we had to send many miles to get some.' Resaldar-Major Nur-ul-Hasan said that in the 6th Bengal Cavalry, in which he had 'served for thirty-six years, about three per cent. used opium.*"

It was further proved (Q. 16,952) that, of 240 Sikhs in the 10th Bengal Lancers, "only eight or nine take it all the year round." Of the 2nd Punjab Infantry, Colonel Turner said that "only two or three per cent. take opium regularly," and the Surgeon in charge had no doubt that it had a prejudicial effect in cases of pneumonia. Colonel Biscoe, 19th Bengal Lancers, said, he gave no numbers, because the numbers varied so greatly.

"It is also fallacious," he said, "to take a percentage of Sikhs, because it is very rare for a young Sikh to take opium at all. The habit is chiefly amongst middle-aged and old men."

This evidence was confirmed by most of the witnesses. The last of the Sikh regiments inquired into at Delhi was the 29th Punjab Infantry. Lieut.-Colonel Reid said the general tone of the regiment "is against its use;" that

"the habitual opium eater's appearance is against him; he seems to have deteriorated physically."

The Colonel said further in his evidence:—

"Nine men, that is 1 per cent. of the regiment, habitually eat opium . . . of whom 3 men, or one-third per cent. of the regiment, eat in excess; and 6 men, or two-thirds per cent., eat in moderation.' 'Morally the results are bad. The habitual opium-eaters are marked men in the regiment, and are not trusted like the rest. I would not enlist an opium-eater if I knew it.' Only one commanding officer of Rajputs appears to have given evidence, viz., Colonel Jamieson, 7th Bengal Infantry. He stated that in his regiment 12 men used opium in moderation and 1 in excess. The general evidence from the Sikh States shows that 'taking opium before 40 years of age is considered, objectionable, and a species of licentiousness.'"

CHINESE SOLDIERS AND OPIUM.

Then, with regard to the condition of the soldier in China, Consul Allen, Chefoo, said (Vol. 5, p. 278):—

"I expect that the civil and military officials would indignantly deny that men under their

* "The Opium Habit in the East," p. 65.

orders smoked opium. In fact, the Brigadier-General in charge of the troops told me that he dismissed at once any soldier caught smoking opium."

In the same volume, p. 266, Consul Bullock, of Newchwang, said—

"Ask a Chinese which would win in a fight, a regiment of men allowed to smoke opium or one of similar men who were prevented from doing so, and he will laugh at the simplicity of the question. . . . Opium-smoking is condemned in Chinese opinion as degrading, because injurious. The public voice cries out against it as a great evil to the nation."

Again, Consul Hurst, of Tainan (page 323) declared :—

"As long as China remains a nation of opium-smokers there is not the least reason to fear that she will become a military power of any importance, as the habit saps the energies and vitality of the nation."

Speaking of India alone—so far as malarial disease was concerned—so far as the native soldier, the cultivator, and the native States were concerned—it was shown by the evidence that there was no force in the argument that the cultivation of the drug was essential to or required by any of them.

OPIMUM-SMOKING IN INDIA.

He now came to what was perhaps, after all, the crucial part of the position he took, and that was opium-smoking. He had never, in any speech he had made on the question—and he was not aware that any of his hon. friends had done so—gone deeply into the habits of taking opium pills or small quantities of the drug. What he and his friends had always gone steadily against was the trade in opium and the practice of opium-smoking in China, the Straits Settlements, and in India itself. On this point he was at one with the Commissioners, for he was glad to say they went straight against opium-smoking in India. In paragraph 80 of the Report, the Commissioners said :—

"On the other hand, it was clearly shown before us that native public opinion generally condemns the habit as disreputable, mainly, perhaps, from its associations, and this opinion is shared by the great mass of European witnesses, official and private, including the medical practitioners."

Again, on page 118, they say* :—

"The practice of opium-smoking is generally looked down upon in India as a low and vicious habit. Several of the witnesses thought the practice—and especially that of madak smoking—injurious to health. Others thought that the injurious effects were not due directly to the smoking, but were due to the associations and surroundings of the habit. These are certainly very bad. The practice of smoking seems to require that it shall be carried on in company, and the premises or 'dens' in which opium-smokers meet in India are of a squalid and insanitary character."

This view was confirmed in the memorandum of Mr. Haridas Veharidas, one of the native members of the Commission, which was attached to the Report. He said :—

"The practice of opium-smoking is generally condemned, but nothing short of its abolition by law will, in my humble opinion, put an end to it. It is most desirable that it should be made penal. . . . A strict law should be made prohibiting opium-smoking in any form and under any circumstances."

The Maharaja Bahadur of Darbhanga stated, in a note supplementary to the Report of the Commissioners, that while he thought it was impossible to make any suggestions that could apply to the whole of India, and therefore hesitated to lay down any hard-and-fast line, yet he—

"would urge that opium should be sold in bottles or phials labelled 'poison,' and the minimum dose which is likely to be fatal should also be legibly printed in the vernacular on these labels. . . . The habit of opium-smoking is generally looked upon as a degrading habit. Mr. Haridas Veharidas has entered into the subject very fully; and I find myself in agreement with his views on the subject."

Other native gentlemen in various parts of India took a similar view. Among English officials who gave evidence,† Mr. H. E. M. James, of the Northern Division, Bombay Presidency, said :—

"In India it is a degrading vice, the mark of a debauchee, and 99 out of 100 who practise it are degraded and worthless, perhaps criminal, persons."

* This extract is from the Memorandum by Sir W. Roberts, M.D., repeatedly referred to with approval in the Majority Report.—[Ed.]

† The three extracts which follow are taken from the Blue Book, "Consumption of Opium in India," 1892.—[Ed.]

Mr. J. M. Campbell, Bombay, said :—

"Though the description under review may be overdrawn and misleading, the practice of opium smoking is evil and wasteful. It would be well if it did not exist."

The collector at Satara said :—

"The vice of opium-smoking evidently possesses a fearful fascination, when once it is acquired, and its effects are deadly, depriving the victim of all moral resolution. With these facts made palpable, it is a serious thing for Government to offer any facility for acquiring the vice, by licensing a shop where anyone is at liberty to make a trial."

To the same effect he might quote many other witnesses. Now, as to the prevention of the evil, the Commissioners stated that though they were unable to recommend the adoption of measures of restrictive legislation, yet they did recommend that the licensing of shops in the province for the manufacture and sale of opium should be abandoned. On page 72 of the Report the Commissioners said :—

"While we are not prepared to recommend measures of restrictive legislation, we are in favour of making it difficult for smokers of *Chandu* and *Madak* to indulge in the habit. We recommend that the Government should abandon in all provinces the licensing of shops for the manufacture and sale of these preparations, showing thereby that they are in sympathy with public opinion. In the Punjab, Bombay, North-Western Provinces, and Oudh this has already been done, and in those provinces, individuals, though they may manufacture the preparations for their own use, are not permitted to possess a larger amount than 180 grains weight. We recommend that these provisions be extended to the other provinces of British India. The manufacture of small quantities by private persons is wasteful, and the process tedious. Only confirmed smokers therefore are likely to incur the expense and trouble. The general adoption of this system, which is undoubtedly repressive, so far as it can be enforced, will tend to prevent the spread of the habit, and lead, it may be hoped, to its ultimate extinction."

The Commissioners came nearly up to his standard in dealing with the question so far as opium-smoking in India was concerned, whether they took the recommendation of the English members and Indian officials who proposed to take away the licences of shops for the manufacture and sale of opium, or whether they adopted the advice of the two native members of the Commission, who knew the country intimately, and who suggested that opium-smoking should be put down by law.

A DECLINING TRADE.

The trade in opium is falling away. The revenue from it in 1880-81 was Rx. 8,451,382, and in 1894-95 it had fallen to Rx. 4,138,300. Opium-smoking in India was condemned as a low and vicious habit; and now he proposed to prove that in China this habit is undermining society, and from its effects the people were surely deteriorating.

THE EFFECTS ON CHINA.

Mr. E. Starkey, who had been for 27 years a merchant in China, said, Vol. V., p. 261 :—

"There are many smokers in moderation, but usually after ten years or so indulgence they suffer in health and require increased doses . . . The opium habit is undermining society in this province (Kiang-su); the moral standard of non-smokers is affected by it, and the people are surely deteriorating."

This gentleman was formerly an importer of opium. Our Vice Consul at Canton, Mr. Bourne, said :—

"It is correct to say" that there can be no moderation: "excessive habit is condemned as degrading and injurious, but the moderate habit only as likely to lead to excess."

Mr. Wilkinson, Acting Vice Consul in Corea, quoted Dr. Landis as saying :—

"It ruins morally and physically at least 90 per cent. of all Koreans who use it."

Mr. Frank Trench, of Chung-king, in China, said :—

"Opium-smoking is an unmitigated evil. It has enormously added to the sin and misery of this country. It weakens every physical power before long, and makes wreck of the man or woman eventually for certain."

Sir George Staunton, who was the representative of the East India Company at Canton, said, many years ago :—

"It is mere trifling to place the abuse of opium on the same level with the abuse of spirituous liquors. It is (*i.e.*, the abuse) the main purpose in the former case; but in the latter it is only the exception."

Miss Geraldine Guinness, who wrote "Four Years' Sojourn in China," had travelled through six of its provinces, and was also personally acquainted with the opium question in Tonquin, the Straits Settlements, Colombo, and Aden.

She gave a graphic account of some of her opium experiences in China. She spoke of how her heart ached and bled during the painful hours in which she had worked by the bedside of women and girls who had poisoned themselves by opium to save themselves from fates worse than death, to which they had been sold because their fathers and husbands wanted opium. "The opium vice," she said, "is not one crime simply, but a concentration of all crimes." She spoke of the great opium palaces of lust in Shanghai that she had visited, where hundreds of women were held in bitter bondage. "Crimes of the blackest dye," she affirmed, "are directly traceable to opium in China." Archdeacon Wolfe, in 1888, wrote:—

"The devil could not have invented a more pernicious vice for the destruction of soul and body than this of opium-smoking, and woe to the man who by word or deed gives any support or encouragement to the hell-born traffic! Men openly and without shame prostitute their wives, in order to procure for themselves the means of indulging in opium-smoking. Little children are sold as slaves and turned away from the embrace of their helpless mothers in order that their degraded fathers may have money to buy opium. All this and much more may be told of the effects of opium-smoking on the miserable people; yet professing Christians in England see no harm in it, and openly advocate the abominable traffic, which makes it possible and comparatively easy for the Chinese people to ruin themselves and their wives and children for time and for eternity!"

In answer to the questions issued by the Commission and sent to China, there were varying estimates of the proportions of opium-smokers who suffered more or less injury. The medical missionaries said 71 per cent.; other missionaries, 74 per cent.; medical officials, 55 per cent.; sundry medical men, 61 per cent.; Consuls, 58 per cent.; other officials, 40 per cent.; one merchant, 80 per cent.; and the Sassoons, who were importers, 10 per cent. An LL.D. of Oxford, who was now in the pay of the Chinese Government, in sending a contribution to the Anti-Opium Society, wrote:—

"Having lived among the Chinese for 34 years, and seen the disastrous results of the fast-increasing consumption of opium, it has long been my wish to aid in any reasonable scheme that may be started to remove this enormous evil, which has undermined and almost destroyed the very life and strength of the nation. Japan,

with her total exemption from the use of the drug, is proving more than a match for China, now almost overpowered by it. I fear that China has to go through a dreadful course of humiliation and suffering before she can be driven to free herself from the baneful effects of opium by using the strong and drastic remedies that are now necessary. Japan is a most dangerous enemy, but even if China can withstand a Japanese invasion she can never survive unless this soul and body destroying poison is completely exterminated."

AN IMMORAL REVENUE.

He had proved that that portion of the revenue derived from supplying the army deteriorated the soldier and was immoral. Certainly that derived from the drugging of infants was immoral, and as certainly that derived from facilitating suicide and murder. No fewer than 53 witnesses admitted that opium was continually used in the promotion of sensuality. A gentleman living in Singapore, who had studied the question carefully, said:—

"The more I investigate the subject the more plain and clear is the ultimate connection between opium and sensual vice."

Surely this was an immoral revenue. In India smoking was condemned on all hands—by our own Commission, by the native Commissioners especially, and by our intelligent officials. All called out for the abolition of the habit and the destruction of this portion of our immoral revenue. When we turned to our customer China, the evidence was stronger still that our opium and her own were causing her destruction as a nation. Ninety per cent. of our revenue came from China, and we were aiding in ruining China by participating in the trade. We could not get over the fact that, although China might supply herself and did supply herself, we were participators in that which was immoral; and this was the ground on which he asked the House to vote for the Resolution. The argument that if we were not to supply China with opium China would supply herself is one which was very well met in Jonathan Dymond's *Essays on Morality*. He said, practically:—I have no right to do that which is wrong, if it is wrong, because somebody

else is going to do wrong. His words are :—

“ If I were to sell a man arsenic, or a pistol, knowing that the buyer wanted to commit murder, should I not be a bad man? If I let a house knowing that the renter wanted it for purposes of wickedness, am I an innocent man? Upon such reasoning you might rob a traveller on the road if you knew that at the next turning a footpad was waiting to plunder him. To sell property or goods for bad purposes, because if you do not do it some one else will, is like a man selling his slaves because he thought it criminal to keep them in bondage.”

This was their position : it was not that we supplied the whole of China, but that we supplied China with that which was immoral in its character and consequences, and was deteriorating to China.

THE NEED OF RETRENCHMENT.

The hon. Member for Central Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) proposed to make an addition to the Resolution*; and that Amendment expressed views which he held ; but he had not touched upon the question of finance, which was referred to a Commission. There were many who believed that our Frontier Policy in India was a policy which was of an expensive and unknown character, and required placing on a more permanent basis. Since the Afghan war we had had 10,000 more English troops and 20,000 more native troops. Whether we required them or not, Parliament had not the means of knowing ; but the cost of them was largely eating up the increase in the revenue of India.

* The following is the Amendment referred to :—“ Mr. NAOROJI : As an Amendment to Sir Joseph Pease's Amendment, at end, add—And that recognising that the people of India ought not to be called upon to bear the cost involved in this change of policy, that oppressive taxation and the stoppage of expenditure necessary for the welfare and progress of the Indian people must be avoided, this House is of opinion that retrenchments and reforms should be effected in the Military and Civil expenditure of India, that means should be adopted to develop Indian resources, and that such temporary assistance should be given from the British Exchequer as would be required in order to meet any deficit of revenue which would be occasioned by the suppression of the Opium traffic.”

WHAT POLICY IS TO BE ADOPTED?

In 1891 Mr. Smith declared, as Leader of the House and of the Government, that the policy of the Government was to diminish the area of poppy cultivation, and that it would be persevered in in the future. Mr. Gladstone put pressure upon the Government to pursue that policy, and the House carried the Resolution in favour of greatly diminishing the cultivation of the poppy and the production and sale of opium. What was the Government going to do or say now? In 1891 six Members of the Cabinet, and 12 of the rank and file of the Government, declared their conviction of the immorality of the opium trade; and in 1893 the majority of their supporters voted against the appointment of this Commission, believing that the House had settled the moral question involved. Were the Government now going to put an end to smoking opium in India as recommended by the Commission? Were they going to repudiate or to fulfil Mr. Smith's pledges of 1891? Were they going to withdraw or add to Mr. Gladstone's pressure of 1893? Was their policy one of continuing to draw a portion of their revenue from this foul source, or would they endeavour to abandon it? He had proved that a great portion of the comparatively small Indian revenue was a revenue immoral in its origin, that the Chinese and Singapore trade was an immoral trade, and that we were making profit by debasing our neighbours. Some of them had laboured hard believing that the good name of this country was at stake. Opium might be capable of being used in old age or for medical purposes with advantage; but the trade in it generally was an immoral trade. The Christian Churches said so, political economy said so, morality and ethics said so; and all these forces would ultimately unite to say that the country should not carry on a trade which was so debasing and demoralising in its character. He concluded by moving the Amendment.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe), in seconding the Amendment, said, he proposed to confine

his remarks to the attitude of the authorities in India with respect to this Commission and to the procedure of the Commission itself.

THE VICEROY'S LETTER.

On November 20, 1893, two days after the Commission met, there was laid before it a very important document—a letter from the Governor General of India—and it was not to be found anywhere in the report of the Commission's proceedings. As that contained a statement in support of the existing system, and a warning as to the serious political consequences that might ensue from interfering with it, it looked like an attempt to influence unduly the course of the inquiry. It was an extraordinary proceeding on the part of the Governor General. It would not be tolerated on the part of a high political executive officer in this country, and he would not dream of it. He hoped his right hon. Friend the Secretary for India would give his opinion as to that letter and produce the document, which came from the Governor General, was laid before the Committee at almost its earliest stage, and was intended to influence its proceedings.

CIRCULARS REQUIRING EVIDENCE TO BE SUBMITTED TO CALCUTTA.

Hon. Members who studied the seven volumes of the proceedings of the Commission carefully would find here and there, not very carefully arranged—nothing was carefully arranged in those volumes—communications from the Central Government to the subordinate governments in Madras, Bengal, Central India, North-West Provinces, and the Resident of Hyderabad, giving instructions as to the manner in which evidence was to be collected, indicating the kind of evidence, and requiring that lists of witnesses, with their evidence, should be sent to the Central Government. That was a proceeding not calculated in any respect to aid the Commission in finding out the truth. This want of trust in subordinate governments was very much misplaced under the circumstances. Their excise regulations and other characteristics being different, they ought to

have been left to take their own course in relation to the Royal Commission as to witnesses and evidence. What effect was such a course likely to have on these subordinate governments? Precisely what he believed was followed by the Government of the North-West Provinces. They issued instructions that none of their officials should communicate direct with the Secretary of the Royal Commission. He wondered what would be thought, if, when a Commission or a Select Committee was appointed in this country, executive officers were found interposing to prevent any of their subordinates dealing direct with the Secretary of the Commission or the Clerk of the Committee. What had been the action of the authorities with respect to the collection of evidence and towards witnesses?

A MISSING RETURN.

But before he dealt with that he should like to point out that there was one great omission with respect to this matter. The hon. Baronet who moved this Motion had alluded to the soldier argument. They often heard that the regiments drawn from certain parts of the country could not live without opium, that it was their daily stimulant, and they must have it. A circular was issued to the officers commanding every regiment and battalion in the native army asking them for numerical returns as to the numbers of opium smokers, &c. But he had looked in the Blue Books in vain for any of these figures. Where were the replies to these circulars? Parliament should have been furnished with them, whether they upheld the action of the authorities on the opium traffic or were against it.

MISLEADING CIRCULARS.

Then, when the House came to the issue of circulars to persons who desired to give evidence, there were strong illustrations of what he would almost venture to call the perversion of terms of reference to the Commission. All would agree that when a document was quoted it should be quoted accurately, and if it was said that the Government had resolved on a

certain policy the exact words should be given in which that policy was laid down. He had strong complaint to make with respect to this. One official of the Indian Government—Mr. Lyall by name—issued a circular, and in that circular quoted the objects of the Inquiry most inaccurately. It was quite true that two days afterwards correct copies of the House of Commons Resolution were sent out. Whether Mr. Lyall's attention had been called to it or not he did not know, but in his circular the terms of the reference were misquoted and the circular was misleading.

SELECTION OF WITNESSES.

Let him now turn to the witnesses. A certain medical practitioner, Isau Chandra Roy, M.B., received a circular desiring him to give evidence on particular points. Surely when evidence was asked for, it was not usual to prescribe in the first instance to a person the points on which it was desired he should give evidence. He was usually asked the points on which he desired to give evidence, and then it was seen whether or not they fell within the terms of the reference. On 4th December a letter was sent to this gentleman, who sent in his evidence, it not being favourable to the existing system. A date was fixed for his examination, and on 3rd January the officer who asked him to give evidence and suggested points on which he should give it, wrote to him that :—

“Under instructions received from the Government you are not required to attend to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Opium.”

The same treatment was meted out to others whose evidence was not favourable to the Central Government. Mr. Roy attended on the Commission after he had been told he need not, and stated that not only had he received that treatment, but others had been treated in the same way. The evidence of Rai Bahadur Jai Prakishlal, C.I.E., Dewan, or chief officer of the Dumraon Raj, a gentleman of high position, was not favourable to the Government, and though present at the Commission he was not called as a witness. He had most

important and unfavourable testimony to give respecting cultivation of the poppy. The list of witnesses at Lucknow contained a large number of names of persons who were not called. There were 24 called, 23 of them being favourable to the system. The whole list was called for, but never produced. Among those not called were a number who were opposed to the cultivation of poppies, and it turned out that two of them were actually officers of the Indian Government, who were prepared to say that the suppression of that cultivation would have no injurious effect either upon the revenue or rents.

HOW THE CASE WAS ENGINEERED IN RAJPUTANA.

The most striking illustration of the way in which the case was worked up and engineered by the Indian authorities was afforded by the case of Rajputana. On the 9th September the Government of India directed the Agent-General of that State to give instructions for the appointment of witnesses and the nomination of a representative European officer, and that an abstract of the evidence should be sent to the Central Government. Upon the 22nd September, Colonel Trevor, the Agent General, issued a circular to all political officers in Rajputana, and on 5th of October, Colonel Abbott was appointed to give evidence and to produce witnesses. The circular that Colonel Abbott drew up was of a most extraordinary character. It filled two or three pages of the Blue Book, and certainly he had never seen before such leading questions as it contained, questions and instructions showing a want of fairness of mind and of judicial temper on the part of those who were getting up evidence to be laid before a Commission, that was surprising. The witnesses were assembled a week beforehand, in order that Colonel Abbott might have interviews with all of them before they were examined. Apparently the evidence so obtained did not satisfy the Government, because after they received the Report of Colonel Abbott as to what he had done, Mr. Bayley, Assistant Agent to the Governor General, wrote a

long letter, in which he pointed out that on looking over what Colonel Abbott had stated, Mr. Dane was afraid that the subject of the loss that the Revenue would sustain by the suppression of the cultivation of poppies had not been put forward with sufficient clearness, and directed Colonel Abbott to take further steps in order that the Commission might be fully informed upon that head.

AN INVERSION OF ORDINARY RULES.

Speaking on his responsibility as a Member of Parliament, he could say he had given the House only a slight and fragmentary illustration of what he could lay before them under this head of witnesses and evidence. The whole thing was the most complete inversion of the ordinary rule to which we were accustomed in this country when it was desired to elicit the truth upon any question. It was the duty of the Indian Authorities to take the utmost care that the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth was (so far as they had any control) laid before the Commission. But by this process of misleading circulars, prescribed questions, suggestions in a particular direction, examination and filtration of evidence, and withholding of certain witnesses, the precisely contrary course was taken. The Commission was fed by the Authorities with certain evidence, and that only. The result was much what might have been expected.

"WHATEVER GOVERNMENT THINKS IS
RIGHT."

The whole matter was summed up concisely by one witness in his written reply to questions sent to him :—

"That is the general opinion, but whatever the Government thinks is right."

Nothing could bring home to the English people more clearly the character of the evidence that had been given before the Commission than those words, and nothing more contradictory to our English ideas of getting at the truth than the course that had been adopted by the Indian Government in this matter could be conceived. That House itself

even, would not be sitting in its present form if the people of this country had during the centuries held the notion that whatever the Government thought was right. He protested against the idea that had got into the minds of some of these poor people that they were bound to think as the Government did upon this subject.

SHADOWING AT GYA.

He should like to conclude his portion of this aspect of the matter by alluding to the behaviour of the authorities to a Royal Commissioner. At Bankipur, on 3rd January 1894, the hon. Member for Holmfirth laid before the Commission particulars of the police of the district of Gya having been round inquiring of the people into his (Mr. Wilson's) movements, whom he had seen, what had been said by and to him by the inhabitants, etc. On the 4th January Mr. Macpherson, collector of revenue, appeared before the Commissioners and explained—

"I had heard in Calcutta from Mr. Dane that anti-opium people had been over our district hunting up evidence they seemed to think of importance."

He had therefore spoken to the local superintendent of police, who had set his men to work. Those who were engaged in endeavouring to elicit the truth on this question ought not to have been pressed by the police in this way or spoken of in this manner, nor should Mr. Harris, the superintendent of police, and his myrmidons have been permitted to track out the movements of the hon. Gentleman and his friends, who were engaged in the work. They could not expect fair evidence to be given to the Commission if the police were set to work like that.

THE PROCEDURE OF THE COMMISSION CHALLENGED.

Turning now to the second part of his subject, the procedure of the Commission itself, his hon. Friend the mover had dwelt upon the fact that the two secretaries were Indian officials. He did not suppose they would have any contradiction from the other side of the

House with regard to that, as they had in regard to another matter. Mr. Hewitt and Mr. Baines represented that great despotic bureaucracy which governed, and, to his thinking, on the whole so well the Indian Empire. He endorsed what had been said by his hon. Friend that this Commission ought to have been supplied with a secretary from among the many competent men to be found in London who was not imbued with the traditions and methods of the Indian Government, and who above all was acquainted with English standards of justice and fair play. Such a man would have taken care that the Commission should be treated with respect, and that the witnesses should be summoned and dealt with in a fair way. Then there was the special agent, Mr. Dane, who was one of those who committed himself very strongly in 1890 to an opinion on this opium question.

THE TREATMENT OF WITNESSES.

Coming to the treatment of witnesses, he entirely endorsed what his hon. friend had said with regard to the questioning of certain members of the Commission. Sir James Lyall, undoubtedly, had been in the service of the Indian Government, and there was no question as to the position of Mr. Fanshawe, who was Postmaster General in the Indian service. He had read with a feeling of almost shame and indignation the manner in which these two gentlemen had thought fit to examine witnesses. They had asked them with regard to their private affairs and their income; persons of the humblest class were asked questions of a character which one would expect only from an Old Bailey practitioner. He did not think that the majority of that House who voted for the Commission—he himself voted against it—desired our fellow-subjects in India to be treated as some of them had been by some of the members of the Royal Commission. He ventured to say that any hon. Gentleman filling the position of Chairman of a Select Committee of that House would have at once called any of his colleagues to order who so treated witnesses coming before the Committee. The humbler

the position of the witness, and the more nervous he was, the more kindly should be his treatment, and the more also should the chairman and the members endeavour to set him at his ease. One witness remarked in respect of a private and personal question, he did not know if it would affect the character of his evidence, but said of course he had no objection to say if the question was pressed. Mr. Fanshawe at once said: "I must press the question." He wished to pay his tribute of respect to his hon. Friend the Member for the Prestwich Division of Lancashire, who conducted his examination in a very different way; and who, when a witness demurred to answering questions of rather a private nature, said that certainly he would not press them. There was the greatest contrast in this respect between the conduct of the hon. Member for the Prestwich Division of Lancashire and that of Sir James Lyall and Mr. Fanshawe.

HOW MEMORIALS WERE TREATED.

Passing from that he desired to call attention to the very different treatment which was accorded to the memorials of various bodies, and pointed out that while all the pro-opium memorials were allowed to go into the appendices without a word of comment, an official was set to work by the Indian Government to tear to pieces the anti-opium memorial from Calcutta, this official being a person, he it observed, charged with the collection of evidence. Surely this Commission ought to have been above that sort of thing.

HOW OUR POLICY WITH CHINA WAS DEALT WITH.

With regard to evidence as to our opium policy with China, the Chairman of the Commission, Lord Brassey, actually stopped two witnesses of great competency from giving evidence as to this, and said—

"We may take it that we all regret that policy of the past, that we accept the statement that was made on behalf of the late Government by Sir James Fergusson that such a course of policy as that would never be permitted again; that, I think, is agreed."

Would it be believed, however, that after this the Commission allowed 150 pages of the most controversial matter upon this opium policy with China to appear in their Report? If Mr. Dane, who wrote this, had been examined before a Committee of that House, half his statements would have been made mincemeat of. Such a procedure would not have been allowed by a single Private Bill Committee upstairs. These 150 pages were saturated with mis-statements and inaccurate particulars, and altogether the contribution was not worth the paper on which it was written, and he deprecated even the cost of printing such a document, which had not formed the subject of any cross-examination.

MISLEADING QUOTATIONS.

Then in the Majority Report here regretted to say there were the most misleading quotations which had ever been his lot to see in any public document. There were two missionaries named Ashmore and Bone, and in the case of Mr. Ashmore the statement put into his mouth by the majority in their Report was not borne out in the least degree on turning to his evidence. In the case of Mr. Bone something worse had been done. They pretended to give his words, but they absolutely left out two or three sentences which had a vital bearing on the issue without any indication of the omission. He never saw such a specimen of misleading quotation. Such things deprived the Report of the Commission of any real value.

A FRAUDULENT TABLE.

Then there was a table given on page 12 of Volume 6 of the Report of certain figures in which a large number of years were left out. The whole argument based on these figures disappeared when they supplied the figures that were left out. He could fill pages of *The Times* newspaper with the inaccuracies contained in the Report; the time they had had to examine into the matter had been all too short.

UNAUTHORISED PAPERS.

Turning to the unauthorised papers appended to the Report, he said he had inquired as to how these precious documents

came to be there. He had had a correspondence with Lord Brassey, who informed him that no request was made to either Mr. Dane or Mr. Baines to write these papers, but when they appeared it was thought desirable to put them in. He (Mr. Ellis) believed their insertion was never brought before the Commission at all. There was a Supplemental Historical Note by Mr. Dane occupying 35 pages; an account of the recent action of the Government of India with regard to poppy cultivation of 9; and a history of the movement in England against opium of 6,—50 in all. As to the last, they might as well ask the Secretary of the Licensed Victuallers Association to write a history of the temperance movement.

MR. WILSON CLOSED.

He would now come to the last feature in the proceedings of the Commission, which had, even after all he had seen, filled him with astonishment. The Royal Commission, on the last page of their Report, referred to his hon. Friend the Member for the Holm-firth Division. They say:—

“We desire to make a special reference to the Report which we understood to be in preparation by our colleague, Mr. Wilson. The criticism or suggestions which it may contain have not been submitted for our consideration. We regret that in the discussion which took place during the preparation of our Report we were not placed in possession of the views of our colleague.”

Why not? What right had the Commissioners to use that language? Lord Brassey, the Chairman of the Commission, wrote two letters to his hon. Friend on the 2nd and 7th of January of this year, enclosing a copy of a letter that he addressed to Sir James Lyall. Lord Brassey told his hon. Friend that it would be unprofitable to enter into a prolonged discussion, and that he did not anticipate that their further deliberations round the Table would occupy many days. In his letter to Sir James Lyall Lord Brassey said:—

“I strongly insist that the completion of our work has become of extreme urgency, and having received two communications within the last few days, I feel my duty calls for some decided course of action. . . . I shall in any case relieve the Commission from further collecting work on the 26th.”

That was a proceeding for a Chairman ! Giving notice that in three weeks time the Closure would be applied ! Having thus closed the mouth of his hon. Friend, the Commissioners thought fit to reproach him with not having his assistance in discussing the Report. His hon. friend would have been extremely ill-advised if, after receiving the Chairman's letter, he had in any way obtruded his advice on the Commission. It was not a case of closure by compartments : it was the guillotine all at once. That method of conducting a Royal Commission was, he believed, unprecedented. He did not wonder that there was some little impatience on the part of the Secretary of State for India, for the Commission had been dragging on for three months in India and twelve months in this country, and during that time the Chairman of the Commission did not think it inconsistent with his duty to be out of the country a good many months. There was at the time no effort being made to prepare a report or to bring the inquiry within reasonable distance of a conclusion.

THE SECRETARY'S ACTION.

He must say one or two words on the action of the Secretary. Mr. Baines had in two particulars shown that he was utterly wanting in the discretion necessary in an office of that kind. In the first place he deliberately and of his own motion suppressed a note which the hon. Member for the Holmfirth Division desired him to insert if certain correspondence was put in. In the next place he prematurely disclosed the Report of the Commission. It was a most extraordinary thing that an officer of the Indian Government should have disclosed this Report on Saturday the 20th April to a particular newspaper, and that one a powerful friend of the existing system. It appeared in that newspaper on the 22nd, and it was not in the hands of Members till May 7th. The Secretary of State said he had reasons to believe that the Report would be laid on the Table on the 22nd, but if it had there was no reason why it should have been given out to a particular paper on the 20th. He said that on both these two aspects

of the question—on the conduct of the authorities and the procedure of the Commission—the illustrations he had given, and which could be supplemented by the score, had gone far to vitiate and weaken the claim of the Report of this Commission to their respect.

THE TRUE FUNCTIONS OF A ROYAL COMMISSION.

From the first letter of the Viceroy, that most extraordinary document which was laid before the Commission on the 20th November, down to the closing of the hon. Member for the Holmfirth division, there was one persistent intention on the part of the authorities in India to regard this, not as a free inquiry, but as a defence of the Indian opium policy of the Government. He acquitted the Government as a whole, and particularly the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India, from the slightest complicity in, or approval of, the proceedings. He was quite aware they could not have this kind of procedure in this country. The procedure adopted was one ill becoming the reputation and the dignity of a Royal Commission. A Royal Commission had great functions and powers, and it ought to pursue an even tenour in its course. It ought, on the one hand, to resist, as the Judicial Bench would resist, all pressure of the Executive Government, and on the other hand ought not to listen to words of untruth, but freely admit all evidence, without fear or favour, without a partial hand, above all, be guiltless of any suppressions of testimony.

MORAL MOVEMENTS IRRESISTIBLE.

This movement, however, depended, not upon Royal Commissions and their Reports. Those of them who took some part in trying to get off the Statute Book certain Acts of Parliament some years ago, knew they had against them more than one Royal Commission, more than one Select Committee of the House of Commons, with a majority against them, and yet these Acts of Parliament disappeared by almost universal consent in 1886. So it would be in this

matter. Those great moral forces on which this movement rested were, to a large extent, independent of their action in this House, even independent of the lives of particular Governments, and he was convinced that they would, in time, sweep away that system which he declared—which six Members of the present Cabinet and a dozen other Members of the Administration declared in 1891—to be morally indefensible. He begged to second the Amendment.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. HENRY FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.), said: Mr. Speaker, If the Amendment which you have put from the Chair had been one of censure on the recent Royal Commission, of censure upon the individual Members, of censure on the mode in which that Commission conducted its proceedings, of censure upon its officers; and calling for the strict action of this House and the Government of India with reference to these officers, I could have understood the present Debate.

AN UNPRECEDENTED ATTACK.

But, Sir, my hon. Friends, for whose motives I have the greatest possible respect, must pardon me if I say I can see little or no connection between the startling Resolution which they ask the House to pass and the unprecedented personal attack they have made upon the gentlemen who have composed that Royal Commission and upon those who have aided them in carrying out its work. I do not care to waste the time of this House with reference to what I call irrelevant matter, but I have a duty to perform to my absent friend Lord Brassey and to the other members of that Commission, and I have also a duty to perform to those servants of the Indian Government who have no means of defending themselves against the attacks made upon them to-night. [*Cheers.*] And, Sir, I venture to say the most experienced Member of this House, the man who has known most of Royal Commissions, perhaps the man who has sat most frequently upon them, has never heard a Royal Commission attacked in the way and to the

extent, and, as I venture to say, so groundlessly as has been this Royal Commission. [*Cheers.*]

AN INDUSTRIOUS COMMISSION.

I will say a word or two to the House about this Commission. If one knew nothing of what it had done one would suppose this had been an idle, one-sided excursion of pleasure to India. The hon. baronet the member for Barnard Castle Division went so far as to hold up to the ridicule of the House the hospitality which gentlemen residing in India had offered to this Royal Commission, and generally left upon the House the impression that it was a Commission which had done no work, that it was entirely in the hands of officials, that it was perfectly onesided and prejudiced, that its decisions were in no way worthy of respect. I ask the House to remember the date of this attack. My hon. friend said that perhaps it was unfortunate this question should come on on Friday evening. Yes, Sir, and I think it is unfortunate it should come on on Friday evening, the 24th of May.* This Commission was appointed in accordance with a Resolution passed by this House on June 30, 1893. The Commission was constituted, and constituted, I believe, with the greatest care, by my noble friend Lord Kimberley, and in communication, as I shall show directly, with some of those gentlemen who have taken a prominent part in censuring the Commission. The Commission was formed on September 2. On September 8 this idle Commission commenced its sittings in London. It sat six days in London; it closed its sittings here on the 16th, and then adjourned to meet in Calcutta on November 15. They went to India. They visited Burma, Upper India, Patna, Benares, Lucknow, Umbala, Lahore, Delhi, and Agra. A certain section went to Indore; the other members proceeded to Ahmedabad to pursue their inquiries, and then the whole of them went to Bombay. They sat almost daily

* See Mr. Wilson's Speech, *infra*, p. 34, and footnote there as to errors in dates. Also his reply to the charge of premature action, same page.—ED.

during the whole of that winter. The House will have been led to believe that they examined a very small section of packed and selected witnesses. They examined 723 witnesses. They examined every witness offered by the Anti-Opium Society. They put something like 29,000 questions. They sent interrogatories to China, to the Straits, and to Hong Kong. Of course the answers to those interrogatories were not subjected to cross-examination. But they were not placed in the Blue-book as evidence; they were placed there as statements in reply to interrogatories. Well, the Commission then came back to London. They prepared their Report, a document of enormous length. It is quite true that I pressed them for their Report, and the Member of this House who urged me most frequently to press them for their Report was my hon. Friend the Member for the Rushcliffe Division. I did think the delay was too long, and I pressed on Lord Brassey that the Report should be presented in time for the opening of Parliament.

Government of India; and it is not fair to the Members of this House themselves. I ask how many Members of this House have read this huge pile of papers—these 2,200 pages? Only two Members have read it, and those are, I must presume, the mover and seconder of the Resolution.* They are bound to have read every word of the evidence before they brought such charges as they have formulated in this House to-night. No other man has read it. I have not read it. I plead guilty to it. I am responsible for this matter to the House; but I say frankly that, with the enormous amount of administrative work I have to do at the present moment, and not being quite so strong as I once was, I have found it quite impossible for me to read the evidence and Report so as to pronounce an opinion. And yet we are asked to-night, sitting as a final Court of Appeal, to decide a case of this importance when there is no man in the House who has examined the evidence.

A PREMATURE DEBATE.

That report was signed on April 16 of this year. It was placed on the Table of the House on April 25, and it became public property on the day it was placed on the Table of the House; it was delivered to Members of the House on May 4, and—I call the particular attention of the House to this date—it was sent to India by the mail of May 10; and now, on May 24, not three weeks from the date it was first placed in the hands of Members, and while it is absolutely impossible for the Government of India to have received it—and the minority Report contains a very serious censure on the Government of India—you are asked to-night to declare that it is a prejudiced worthless document; you are asked to declare that all the Commissioners save one were wrong, that one only was right, and between the hours of 9 and 12 o'clock on a Friday night you are asked to pass this Resolution of censure and of the greatest magnitude, so far as India is concerned. I say that such a course is not fair to the Commissioners. I say it is not fair to the people of India; it is not fair to the

THE ORIGIN OF THE COMMISSION.

What was the origin of this Commission? The hon. Members told us that they voted against it. But the House, by a majority of 79, declared the Commission should issue. The House was dealing with a grave question in a grave spirit when, on the instigation of my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian, it appointed the Commission. The points referred to the Commission for investigation were these:—

“I. Whether the growth of the poppy and the manufacture and sale of opium in British India should be prohibited except for medical purposes, and whether this prohibition could be extended to the native States.

“II. The nature of the existing arrangements with the native States in respect of the transit of opium through British territory; and on what terms, if any, those arrangements could be with justice terminated.

“III. The effect on the finances of India of the prohibition of the sale and export of opium, taking into consideration (a) the compensation payable; (b) the cost of the necessary preventive measures; (c) the loss of the revenue.

* See Mr. Wilson's reply as to this, *infra*, p. 34.

"IV. Whether any change short of total prohibition should be made in the system at present followed for regulating and restricting the opium traffic, and for raising a revenue therefrom.

"V. The consumption of opium by the different races and in the different districts in India, and the effect of such consumption on the moral and physical condition of the people.

"VI. The disposition of the people of India in regard to (a) the use of opium for non-medical purposes; and (b) their willingness to bear in whole or in part the cost of prohibitive measures."

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMISSION.

I have seen in an organ of public opinion, which represents the views of my hon. Friends, that this Commission was packed by Indian officials.* (Hear, hear.) My hon. Friends cheer that. There was another criticism of the Commission published in another organ of my hon. Friends immediately after the Commission was formed, and written by my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Caine), who, if he will allow me to say so, is always fair to his opponents and never indulges in personal attack. Let me read what my hon. friend wrote of the Commission† in the quarterly organ of the Anti-Opium Society.

MR. W. S. CAINE: It is not the organ of the Anti-Opium Society.

MR. FOWLER: At all events, my hon. Friend wrote what I am now about to quote. It is said that the members of the Commission have been selected "with great care and deliberation;" that the president, Lord Brassey, is "a man of wide sympathies," and that both sides in the controversy might repose confidence in "his great impartiality, his sound judgment, and his rectitude." Well, I never heard a public man of impartiality, judgment, and rectitude attacked as Lord Brassey has been attacked to-night. Of the medical Member of the Commission, Sir William Roberts, it is said that no better qualified member of the medical profession could be selected.

MR. CAINE: Is there not something more about Sir William Roberts?

MR. FOWLER: Well, that he is of "the old school," and that "his writings show a strong belief in alcohol." Mr. Mowbray, another member of the Commission, is described as the son of one of the most popular Members of the House of Commons, and "a young man of great promise in the Conservative party." As to Mr. Haridas Veharidas, the hon. Member says he does not know what that gentleman knows about opium, but he knows he will bring to the inquiry great knowledge and experience. My hon. Friend then speaks in the highest terms both of the hon. Member for Holmfirth and of Mr. Arthur Pease. He then refers to Sir James Lyall and Mr. Fanshawe, and they are the two who formed the official element—two out of nine. And that is a Commission packed with Indian officials. Sir James Lyall's career is one of the many most honourable careers to be found in the Indian Civil Service. He has been there 34 years, has risen to a high position in the Indian Civil Service, closing his career with the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Punjab. We are told that because he now receives a pension he is incapable of forming an independent judgment. Will anyone tell the Chancellor of the Exchequer that Sir Algernon West is unable to form an impartial judgment upon the question of the English revenue because he has retired on a pension? Mr. James Fanshawe, another of these distinguished servants of the Indian Government, has risen to a high position. Such is the Commission whose conclusions you are to treat with perfect contempt, and whose decisions you are to overrule, simply upon the *ex parte* statements of two honourable and able advocates who opposed the appointment of the Commission, who differ from its conclusions, and who remain perfectly unconvinced, notwithstanding the overwhelming character of the evidence. No, it is too bad to impugn gentlemen like this. The discharge of these public duties involved a great amount of physical and mental labour. It is a thankless duty, but, after all, Englishmen are in the habit of treating public men who do a public duty with the greatest generosity, and with the greatest consideration.

* This reference appears to be to the *Review of Reviews*, which is in no sense an anti-opium organ.—Ed.

† The periodical here referred to is *Abkari*, the quarterly organ of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Society, of which Mr. Caine is Hon. Sec.—Ed.

When we are told that because they were asked out to dinner they could not deal with this case impartially, I must protest against this mode of dealing with a Commission of this character. There is an end of Royal Commissions, which have hitherto been one of the most powerful and most convenient modes of inquiry, if gentlemen discharging the duties of Commissioners are to be treated as these men have been treated.

THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

These Commissioners arrived at a series of distinct conclusions. We all admit that the report of the Commission conflicts with many preconceived opinions. There is a new light thrown upon the whole of this case by the Report. I am not going to say that my hon. Friends are wrong, and the Commissioners are right; I will not say the eight are right and the hon. Member for Holm-forth is wrong; but questions have been raised affecting the opium consumption, affecting the opinions of medical men, and I maintain that before the House of Commons gives a decision, the question must be argued out. Public opinion must be informed on the question; scientific opinion must be ascertained.

THE OPINION OF THE CHURCHES.

My hon. Friend quoted the opinion of the Churches. There is a difference of opinion even there.* The Church of England and the Church of Rome do not take the same view on this question that the overwhelming bulk of the Non-conformist Churches take. This question must be decided not by personal attacks upon the Commissioners, but by the weight and value of the evidence. Take Sir William Roberts. He has written a most able medical memorandum upon this question. That has to stand the test of medical examination in this country, and we cannot take the opinion of any one hon. Member as sufficient. The evidence on which Sir William Roberts has founded his statement and which has guided the opinions of the majority of the Commission is

now before the medical world, and they will have to deal with it.* I have a great many quotations from this Report, but I will abstain from reading them. I have said that there are strong differences of opinion on the missionary view. The Bishop of Calcutta and the Bishop of Lucknow with their clergy addressed two powerful memoranda to the Royal Commission expressing their views that—

“while there are evils in the abuse of opium, they are not sufficiently great to justify us in restricting the liberty which all men should be permitted to exercise in these matters, medical testimony seeming to show that opium, used in moderation, is in this country harmless, and under certain conditions of life distinctly beneficial.”

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Calcutta said :—

“It has been urged by some that the use of opium is a serious obstacle to the success of missionary work. Looking back with an experience of more than 15 years of missionary life, and having consulted priests of longer standing in the country, I have been forced to the conclusion, as far as Catholic missions are concerned, that facts do not tally with this assertion.”

A PLEA FOR INVESTIGATION.

I do not say that there is not strong evidence on the other side. But what I am pleading for is the investigation of that evidence, and not a decision hurriedly reached under such excitement as my hon. Friends'. If two Members of the House cannot agree on a simple statement which is in the Report, how can we accept a statement in the nature of indirect evidence? My hon. Friend says that the medical evidence was nearly equally divided. There were 146 medical witnesses examined, and of these only 20 were against the use of opium, and 126 were the other way.† [Sir J. PEASE dissented.] My hon. Friend says “No.” That proves my point, for the House must investigate this thing for itself. We cannot ask the House to come to a grave decision without such independent investigation. The House is the ultimate court of appeal, and its decision

* See as to the medical evidence on opium as a prophylactic against malaria.—Mr. Wilson's Speech, *infra*, p. 37.

† See Mr. Wilson's Speech, *infra*, p. 36.

* See Mr. Wilson's Speech, *infra*, p. 35.

must be given on the evidence. If we are going to decide a question affecting the Government of India, its revenue, its administration, and its expenditure, I say that the Government of India have a right to be heard on the question before a decision is arrived at. You would not treat any Parish Council in the manner in which my hon. Friend proposes to treat the Government of 300 millions of people. I might leave this question, as Lord Beaconsfield said, "to the instinctive justice of the House." But I have to deal with the Motion which my hon. Friend has proposed.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE'S MOTION CONSIDERED.

He asks us to declare that, after having had presented to it the Report of the Royal Commission, this House is of opinion that the system by which the Indian Opium Revenue is collected is morally indefensible; and to pass a Motion calling upon the Government of India to stop the cultivation of the poppy and sale of opium in British India, except to supply the legitimate demand for medical purposes, and at the same time to take measures to arrest the transit of Malwa opium through British territory. What would be the effect on the Indian Government of passing this resolution? I will quote what the late Prime Minister, the right hon. Member for Midlothian, said:—

"The first duty in governing India, before we commit ourselves to a broad declaration, is to learn the mode in which we can carry that declaration into effect. Nothing could be more ruinous, and few things could be more discreditable, than for you to pass a vote which, on the one side, must remain an idle expression of opinion, without practical result, or else, if acted on, must simply have the effect of throwing the finances of India into confusion, and of greatly compromising the position, the welfare, and even the peace and security of that country."

Remember it is upon the terms of this motion that the House is going to vote to-night.

NOT A VOTE ON THE COMMISSION'S PROCEEDINGS.

It is not upon the question whether one witness was fairly cross-examined or not, or whether one police officer was judicious or injudicious. I know

the cases to which my hon. Friend has referred, and I agree with much of what he said in reference to some of those cases.* But as to the question of general unfairness in dealing with witnesses, that was investigated by the Commission; the Commission has given a distinct ruling on the question, and has acquitted the Government of India on every one of the charges brought against it.

THE CHARACTER OF THE REVENUE.

I am not at this moment arguing the question whether the sale of opium is morally defensible. Remember that it is a revenue arising from restriction and regulation, and a revenue which so affects the price, if opium is a most deadly stimulant, as to make the obtaining of that opium a much more difficult thing than it would otherwise be. The revenue raised from opium in British India is 180 per cent. over the cost price, and the duty raises the price of Malwa opium by 118 per cent. There is a long string of findings by the Commission in which they call attention to the various uses for which opium is raised. They admit that there is no doubt the excessive use of opium is a very great evil and a great vice.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF RESTRICTION.

They point to the fact, which my hon. Friend has not discussed, that there is a very large moderate use of opium in India, and so far as medical exception is concerned—my hon. Friend makes that exception—they deal with it very clearly. They say in paragraph 177:—

"It must be borne in mind that the population of the British provinces is over 220 millions. The number of hospitals and dispensaries under European supervision in those provinces in 1893 was only 1,800, with an average daily attendance of patients numbering 94,000. European non-official practitioners are only found in the Presidency and provincial capitals. The supply of native medical men trained under the European system, though much increased of late years, is still confined to the larger towns or to the district headquarters."

Another witness stated that three-fourths of the deaths occur without the

* See Mr. Wilson's Speech, *infra*, p. 40.

invocation of any professional advice of any sort. The Commission go on to show that the idea of medical exception is an absolute impossibility.* Where are you to draw the line between medical consumption and general consumption, and who are to be the men who are to lay down the rules to guide this exception? With reference to crime, I do not think my hon. Friend stated that crime was in any way promoted in India by the use of this drug. That is something to be said in its favour.

OPIMUM AND ALCOHOL.

With reference to the note of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, my hon. Friend quoted simply his objection to opium-smoking. I think, however, he rather left on the House the impression that a member of the Commission was in favour of the general restriction of opium. Now, what the Maharaja says in this memorandum just circulated is this:—

“To stop the use of opium in cases like these would not only be an unnecessary restriction on the freedom of the subject, but it would also lead to the increased consumption of alcohol.”

And this view is expressed by a large number of witnesses. My hon. Friend says that it is morally indefensible to raise revenue from a stimulant the excessive use of which produces the terrible results which, in his view, flow from opium. I would like to know what my hon. Friend's answer would be to a very keen logical Hindoo who asked him whether, when we proposed to deprive the Indian Government of their opium revenue, we are prepared to adopt the same rule for ourselves.† My hon. Friend the Member for Bradford says “Certainly;” but I do not hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer say “Certainly.” The imaginary opponent of my hon. Friend on this ground of moral indefensibility might say to him,

“I hear from statements in your Legislature, from the statements of your Judges, medical men, and philanthropists, that crime, lunacy, pauperism, disease, desolated homes, and ruined lives in your country are all owing to the results of the excessive use of other stimulants, the

excessive use of which one of your greatest Prime Ministers declared, amid the cheers of the House of Commons, inflicted on the nation more terrible evils than war, pestilence, and famine combined. Is it true, when you say it is morally indefensible to raise money from the restriction and regulation of the sale of a stimulant in India, that you are raising between £30,000,000 and £40,000,000 a year revenue from a similar source?”

[A Voice—“Shameful.”] “Shameful,” says my hon. Friend. Well, then, stop it here first. Go to India with clean hands. You, the wealthy country with your £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 from the Drink Duty—deal with that before you ask India to plunge itself into financial embarrassment on account of the excessive use of a drug which not one of the witnesses before this Commission, no matter how strong his opinions, declared produced anything like the results which the excessive use of alcohol produce in this country.

DIFFICULTY OF STOPPING POPPY GROWTH.

My hon. Friend proposes to stop the growth of the poppy. How is it to be done? It is easy to pass a Resolution of the House of Commons; but the references show that the average area under poppy is held by $1\frac{1}{4}$ million of cultivators under the licensing system, with an enormous proportion below a third of an acre. In the event of Prohibition, all this must come under inspection. I ask the House of Commons to conceive the stopping of the cultivation, carried on by a million or a million and a-half of people, of this plant, which has been grown by them for centuries, which is a chief source from which these poor peasants derive their income and pay their rent. Where is the army of inspectors to come from? Who is to pay the cost? Where is the limit to be put to the extortion, tyranny, and oppression that would arise from putting down this sort of cultivation?

THE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY.

But this is a question which most seriously affects the finances of India. From 1887-8 to 1893-4 the average net

* See Mr. Wilson's Speech, *infra*, p. 39.

† See Mr. Wilson's Speech, *infra*, p. 39.

* See Mr. Wilson's Speech, *infra*, p. 39.

revenue arising from it amounted to Rx. 6,965,000, in 1893-4 it was Rx. 5,746,000, and in 1894-5 it was Rx. 6,661,000. If the cultivation is stopped, where is the deficit to come from? The House of Commons is always practical, especially in matters of finance. The House of Commons never takes off a tax unless it is certain that there can be a corresponding reduction of expenditure. ["Hear, hear," *from several Radical Members.*] My hon. Friends say, "Hear, hear." Where are they going to get this reduction of expenditure?

MR. CAINE: Reduce the Army.

MR. FOWLER: Apart from exchange, there has been no great increase in the Army expenditure in India for a number of years. The Army expenditure, excluding the loss on exchange, was in 1887 19 millions, in 1888 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ millions, in 1889 19 millions, in 1890 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ millions, in 1891 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ millions, in 1892 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and in 1893 considerably under 20 millions. There is, of course, an enormous increase in exchange, for, whereas in 1887 the loss on exchange cost the Government of India six millions, this year it is estimated to cost 15 millions. That is where the real increase of expenditure on the Army lies. It does not lie in increased military expenditure.* We have

* The following letter by Sir Auckland Colvin, K.C.S.I., formerly Financial Member of the Council of the Governor General of India, dated 25th May, commenting on these statements by the Secretary of State, appeared in the *Times* of 1st June:—

"A glance at the Return of East India military expenditure, dated June 8, 1894, printed by order of the House of Commons, shows that in the financial year 1887-88 (which is presumably Mr. Fowler's year 1887) Indian Army expenditure, *minus* exchange, was £18,845,923; in 1892-93 it was £20,477,885; and in 1893-94 (which is not included in the above Returns) it was £20,382,628, an increase since 1887 of £1,536,705.

"But the figures for 1887-88 include £1,475,300 on account of the pacification of Burma, and £18,319 for other 'exceptional payments,' as the Return calls them. In 1892-93, owing mainly to decrease in Burma charges, these had dwindled down to a charge of £759,800, and in 1893-94, in round figures, to £500,000. What we are concerned with is the scale of normal Army expenditure, its increase or decrease, since 1887. Excluding, therefore, from comparison these 'exceptional payments,' the comparative figures are:—1887-88, £17,352,304; 1893-94, £19,882,628.

appointed a Commission to inquire into the military expenditure, but it is nonsense to talk about reducing the military expenditure by five or six millions.

POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES.

There is, however, a still more serious difficulty than the financial difficulty. It is suggested that we should arrest the transit of Malwa opium across British India. Malwa opium is cultivated in Native States, and passes through our territory to reach the seaside, and we levy on it the enormous duty of Rx. 650 per chest. What would be the effect of stopping that? The effect would be to raise a serious question between ourselves and the native States. It would mean the stopping of the cultivation of the poppy to the extent of the present export; and it would entail consequent serious injury and loss on the people in these States.† The average revenue in the Native States derived from opium is 27 per cent. of the whole revenue, and you

"The net increase in normal Army expenditure from 1887 to 1893 was thus about £2,500,000 (or nearly two-fifths of the net opium revenue). Is this 'no great increase'?"

Again, in 1887-88 the charge for exchange on the military expenditure was £1,572,011; in 1893 it was £2,870,969, or an increase of a little over £1,250,000. How can it, then, be contended that the real increase of expenditure in the Army 'lay in exchange—not in increased military expenditure'?"

"None of the above figures, it should be noted, include the heavy items of military defence works, nor of strategic railways, which are debitable to military expenditure. Pending the inquiries of the Royal Commission, it is of importance to have a clear conception of Army expenditure figures, because the future of Chitral is at this moment under settlement, and there is the possibility of a further considerable increase in its normal military charge being inflicted on India. In his telegram from Bombay of May 24, published to-day, your correspondent writes that if Chitral is occupied it will probably be necessary to increase the Indian Army by a brigade, 'and the annual expenditure perhaps by £250,000.'

"It is well, therefore, to be under no illusion as to the actual increase in *bonâ fide* military expenditure hitherto."

† As Mr. Wilson had not time in his speech at Westminster Town Hall to deal with the question of the Native States, we append the following extracts from his "Minute of Dissent," which will be found to have anticipated Mr. Fowler's objections:—

"44. As to the power to stop the transit of opium through British territory, Sir Lepel

cannot be prepared to go to the native rulers of those States and say to them—

“We will cut off more than a quarter of your revenue at one fell swoop, and will prevent you from sending out of your countries a staple article of your industry.”

Griffin said, ‘Of course you can prohibit the export.’ Sir D. M. Barbour said, ‘I think the export to China could practically be stopped,’ but he was confident smuggling into British territory could not. The Hon. W. Lee Warner, in his memorandum, lays down that ‘interference with the internal affairs of Native States has been justified in the past, either (a) when adopted in the interests of the States, or (b) when adopted in the interests of the British Government.’ He marshals instances ‘under class (a)’ into six recognised grounds, including ‘(vi.) to check offences against natural law or public morality.’ The suppression of seizing people for sorcery, and abolition of suttee, are given as instances. Mr. Warner holds that opium does not come under any of these heads. Colonel Trevor, agent to the Governor-General, Rajputana, was asked, ‘would not it be an injustice not to allow’ the produce of the States to be transmitted through British territory, and replied, ‘I do not quite see that. If you think a thing is bad, you are not bound to give a passage through your territory.’

“46. The fact that in the face of a greater falling off in the supplies of Malwa opium than of Bengal opium, the India Government has, since the visit of the Commission, materially increased the payment to the Bengal cultivator and put an additional burden of duty on the Malwa produce, shows more clearly than any official evidence that the right of dealing at will with the export trade, Native as well as British, is quietly claimed and exercised by the paramount Government.”

The following are Mr. Wilson's answers to the first and second questions submitted to the Commission:—

- I.—(a) That the growth of the poppy and manufacture and sale of opium in British India should be prohibited, except for medical purposes.
- (b) Such prohibition should not be forcibly imposed on the Native States, but the example of the British Government should be supported by such influence as may legitimately be employed.
- II. The existing arrangements with the Native States in respect to the transit of opium through British territory depends absolutely on the will of the paramount power, and appear to have been dominated throughout by the financial policy of British India. When the Chinese trade from British India has been brought to an end, as I hold it certainly should be, and when licences to cultivate are no longer granted, licences for the transit of opium through British territory may justly be withheld. There is no legal claim for compensation. Any equitable claims must be tested by further inquiry and reliable evidence.

My hon. Friend quoted from the representative of one of the little States. Why did he not quote the great ones, who stated that they would regard such a measure as an act of hostility on the part of the British Government? I cannot help quoting one of them:—

“In view of the relations existing between the paramount Power and my State, the former would not be justified in calling upon me to prohibit the cultivation of opium in my State.”

There is another question to be considered. How are you going to prevent this opium passing the frontier? And, assuming you stop the transit, how are you going to guard the frontier from smuggling? Remember that this opium is easily concealed and would be a profitable commodity to get across the frontier. The duty is more than two-thirds of its cost. Some of my Friends opposite know a great deal more than I do as to the extent of the frontier line that would have to be guarded, but I am told by experts that it would be at least 5,000 miles. [Sir R. TEMPLE: “Hear, hear!”] Some put it even higher than that. You would have to establish a line of Custom-houses over that great length of territory. We once had a Custom line from the Indus to the north border of Madras, 2,500 miles—as long as from Moscow to Gibraltar—and it took 12,000 officers and men to guard that frontier; and when afterwards it was reduced to 1,500 miles it still took 8,000 men to guard it. Therefore, you would have to raise an enormous army of officials to be added to the already too numerous army that exists. And the cost of all this is to be paid by the people of India! I put this to my hon. Friend as one of the practical difficulties of the case so far as the native States are concerned. But there are political consequences also to be considered. Nobody who has any acquaintance with India can be unaware of the fact that there is a disloyal section of people in India—a small section I admit—who are ready to take every opportunity of holding up the British Government and the Indian Government also to the dislike of the people. I am not prepared, as the Minister for India, to do anything which may tend to reinforce that class by the alienation of the Native States. When my hon. Friend talks about army expenditure he can hardly realise what the

policy he advocates would lead to ; for by adopting it we should embark on a course which would make it necessary to increase rather than decrease the army of India. I must apologise to the House for the length of my speech, and I can only plead that I have left out three-fourths of what I meant and desired to say.

THE MOTION PREMATURE.

Now, the Government object to this Motion of my hon. Friend because it is premature and because it is immature ; because it involves a flagrant injustice on the one hand, and because it is impracticable on the other. We are asked as a Parliament to reject the deliberate judgment of a competent Commission appointed at the instance of this House, and we are asked to reject that judgment without the slightest opportunity of examining, much less testing, the evidence on which that judgment is founded. We are asked to deprive the Government of India of a large portion of its revenue without making any provision for the inevitable deficit which must follow, and thereby involving one of two things—either disabling the Indian Government from meeting its engagements, or necessitating the imposition of heavy extra taxation. Perhaps the House will allow me to say that all Governments, whether they be despotic or constitutional, have long ago learnt the lesson, and learnt it by bitter experience, that the most arduous, the most difficult task which any Government can undertake is to constantly interfere with the daily habits and daily customs of the masses of the people. This resolution pledges the House to make sweeping changes which would affect the social and the personal life of a very large number of her Majesty's Indian subjects, and you are asked to do this in the teeth of the opinion not only of a majority of the Commission, but in the teeth of the opinion of the two distinguished Natives who were put upon the Commission to represent native opinion, and in the teeth of what I do not hesitate to say is the overwhelming preponderance of native opinion. At the same time, while this resolution proposes to destroy the industry, the livelihood, of vast masses of the Indian people, it also menaces our relations with those native

States with whom it is our duty and our interest to be on the most friendly terms. The Resolution my hon. Friend has proposed is not a mere shadowy expression of opinion on some theoretical question totally outside the range of practical politics, but it sanctions a policy of such magnitude and of such far-reaching extent that the House of Commons must be satisfied upon the clearest evidence—satisfied beyond all doubt that that policy is necessary, is practicable, and is safe, before it attempts to impose it, and impose it by force, on our Indian Empire.

MR. R. G. C. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich), as a Member of the Commission, ventured to say that anybody who carefully studied the evidence would believe that the Report which they had given was a fair and impartial Report, and the only Report which they could possibly have published. His hon. Friend, the Member for the Rushcliffe Division was exceedingly polite to him personally with regard to his conduct, but he could only say that he did not wish, in the smallest degree, to separate himself from Sir James Lyall or Mr. Fanshawe, and he could not allow the language which had been used with regard to those two gentlemen to go uncontradicted in this House, because he was perfectly certain that not only could they not have got two more able representatives of the Indian officials, but he believed it would be impossible to have got two men who were more generously disposed and more kindhearted in everything they had to do in connection with the Commission. The Secretary of State had spoken with regard to Sir J. Lyall, and not more warmly than his public services deserved ; but he should like to state that when the Commission were on tour in the Punjab, Sir J. Lyall, as an ex-Governor, was greeted by all classes of the community in the Punjab, not as an ex-Governor, but as a man who had been their personal friend and whom they were delighted to come and welcome. That fact at once demonstrated the kind of man Sir J. Lyall was. Nearly every point which had been raised was brought before the Commission by the hon. Member for Holmfirth, and the Commission came to the conclusions upon them embodied in the appendix and also in the Report.

THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTION.

The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division had talked about the attitude of the Government of India towards witnesses, and said that he understood that all the evidence passed through the hands of the central Government. That did not agree with his own recollection of what happened. There were certain heads of evidence for the presentation of which to the Commission the Government of India held itself responsible, but the rest of the witnesses were selected by the local Governments because they were supposed to know best what persons were likely to give good evidence. The Government of India, instructing the local Governments as to the selection of the independent and non-official witnesses, said :—

“It is desirable that they should be gentlemen of some social standing, of independence of character, and of good general intelligence, and so completely in touch with public feeling in their respective provinces as to command the respect and confidence alike of the people of India and of the members of the Commission.”

The local Governments, he believed, did their work honestly in that way, and he also believed that the witnesses who were examined supplied a fair representation of the views of the people of India.

A PERSONAL CONVICTION.

He had joined the Commission with a perfectly open mind. It was true that in 1891 he voted against the Resolution which was then carried in favour of the abolition of the Opium Trade, but his chief reason for so voting was that he did not feel disposed to revolutionise the finances of India after a Debate lasting three hours only. The evidence laid before the Commission in England, which dealt chiefly with the question as affecting China, was of very much stronger character than anything that they heard in India. Therefore when he landed in India he expected that an infinitely stronger case would be made out against opium in that country than was made out. As witness after witness came before the Commission, it became clearer and

clearer to his mind that there was no case whatever against opium in India from a really national point of view. The witnesses on the anti-opium side seemed to him to be the representatives of local and sectional interests, of temperance and missionary societies, and similar associations. A man would come forward saying that he represented an association, and when he was asked how many members it comprised he would reply 20. Five people came from an association at Lucknow, and it appeared that there were only 175 members in the association out of a population of over 273,000.

HOW WITNESSES WERE SELECTED.

He had seen it suggested that the evidence had been garbled by the Government of India. On that he would like to say that the Government of India only undertook to suggest witnesses to the Commission at the request of the Commission itself, and they telegraphed to the Secretary of State that they would not be responsible for special searches for anti-opium evidence. Commenting on that, the hon. Member opposite said that, as anti-opium evidence was easily available without any special search, the official statement seemed to show that the officials were taking up a partisan attitude. All he could say was, that he consoled with his hon. Friend and his associates, because after considerable search very little evidence seemed to be available to them ; and, as the Secretary of State had said, in no single case did the Commissioners refuse the evidence of any witness put forward by the Anti-Opium Society. On the other hand they were obliged to put off numberless witnesses on the other side. The Appendices to the Report were full of abstracts of the evidence of witnesses who could not be examined for want of time. The result was that he felt that no numerical comparison between the number of witnesses on one side, and the other could be a fair test. The Commission could have had numbers of additional witnesses in favour of opium if they had had more time at their disposal ; but on the other hand, and he thought this was a very material fact, not a single witness put forward by his hon. Friend

opposite and his associates was declined by the Commission. It was impossible to go into details as to these witnesses at that time of the night, though he would be glad to go through them. He would now only ask the House to accept the conclusion at which the Commission had arrived. There might be some slight difference of opinion displayed in some of the details of the reports of their native colleagues, but they were present when the conclusions, of the Commission were discussed at Bombay, they joined in those conclusions and signed the Report now before Parliament. He felt it was impossible to detain the House any longer, but he would ask the House to believe this, that the Commission had as good an opportunity of getting at the truth of this question as any body of men could have, and he believed they had done the best they could to lay the truth before the people of this country. It would have been a pleasanter and an easier task if they had been able to join with those people who claimed for themselves a monopoly in the cause of righteousness and to have made a milk-and-water Report which would have settled nothing; but the Commissioners did not think that if they had done that they would have been doing their duty to the country that sent them out. He certainly did hope, on behalf of the millions of people in India who were consumers of this drug, and still more on behalf of the millions of people who would have to pay additional taxation if this source of revenue were destroyed

—he did hope on behalf of the Government and on behalf of the good faith of the English people, that this Motion would be rejected.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth) said, the House would recognise at once that it was not possible in the two minutes that remained to say anything material on this subject, but having listened with the utmost attention to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State, he would venture to say that if opportunity offered there was scarcely one of the statements the right hon. Gentleman had made that could not be satisfactorily replied to.

SIR R. TEMPLE claimed to move "That the question be now put."

MR. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Motion.

MR. H. J. WILSON, continuing, said, the one question he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman was whether he was at least going to carry out the recommendations of the Commission with regard to smoking. The right hon. Gentleman had said a good deal about the native Members, but was he going to listen in this question to these men who knew the feeling of the people of India? If he would not go so far as that, would he at least listen to the recommendations in the Report of the majority on this question of opium-smoking?

MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford) claimed to move, "That the question be now put."

The house divided:—Ayes, 176; Noes 59.—(Division List No. 107).

THE DIVISION LIST.

AYES.—AGAINST THE MOTION.

- O L* Acland, Right Hon. A. H. Dyke
C Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
C Agg-Gardner, James T.
L Ainsworth, David
L Allen, C. F. Egerton (Pembroke)
U Anstruther, H. T.
L Arch, Joseph
C Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
O L Asquith, Right Hon. Herbert Henry
C Bagot, Captain Joceline FitzRoy
C Baird, John George Alexander
L Baker, Sir John
C Balfour, Right Hon. A. J. (Manchester)
O L Balfour, Right Hon. J. Blair (Clackmannan)
C Banbury, Frederick George
C Barton, Dunbar Plunket
U Bass, Hamar
C Beach, Right Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
L Beaufoy, Mark Hanbury
C Beckett, Ernest William
L Benson, Godfrey Rathbone
C Bill, Charles
C Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
C Boscawen, Arthur Griffiths
C Brodrick, Hon. St. John
C Brookfield, A. Montagu
U Brown, Alexander H.
O L Bryce, Right Hon. James
O L Burt, Thomas
O L Buxton, Sydney Charles
C Byrne, Edmund Widdrington
L Caldwell, James
O L Campbell-Bannerman, Right Hon. H.
U Cavendish, Victor Christian W.
U Chamberlain, Right Hon. J. (Birmingham)
C Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
L Clough, Walter Owen
U Cochrane, Hon. Thomas H. A. E.
C Cornwallis, F. S. Wykeham
C Cotton-Jodrell, Colonel Edward T. D.
L Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
C Crosland, Sir Joseph
C Cubitt, Hon. Henry
C Curzon, Hon. George N. (Lancashire, S.W.)
C Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
C Darling, Charles John
U Darwin, Major Leonard
C Davenport, W. Bromley
C Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
C Donkin, Richard Sim
C Dorington, Sir John Edward
C Douglas, Right Hon. A. Akers-
C Fardell, Thomas George
C Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
C Fergusson, Right Hon. Sir J. (Manchester)
C Finch, George H.
N Finucane, John
C FitzGerald, R. Uniacke Penrose
C Fletcher, Sir Henry
C Folkestone, Viscount
C Forster, Henry William
O L Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
O L Fowler, Right Hon. H. H. (Wolverhampton)
O L Gardner, Right Hon. Herbert
C Gathorne-Hardy, Hon. A.
O L Gladstone, Right Hon. H. J. (Leeds)
C Goldsworthy, Major-General
C Goschen, Right Hon. George Joachim
L Gower, George G. Leveson
C Graham, Henry Robert
C Greene, Henry David
O L Grey, Sir Edward
C Gunter, Colonel
L Haldane, Richard Burdon
C Hamilton, Lord Frederick (Tyrone)
C Hanbury, Robert William
O L Harcourt, Right Hon. Sir William
C Hardy, Laurence (Kent)
C Hayne, Right Hon. Charles Seale
L Hayter, Right Hon. Sir Arthur Divett
C Heath, James
O L Hibbert, Right Hon. Sir J. Tomlinson
C Hickman, Sir Alfred
C Hill, Right Hon. Lord Arthur (Down)
C Hoare, Edward Brodie (Hampstead)
L Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset)
C Hope, Thomas
C Houldsworth, Sir William Henry
C Hudson, George Bickersteth
C Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
C Hutchinson, Captain G. W. Grice-
L Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edward
C Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
U Kenny, W. (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green)
U Kenrick, William
C King, Sir Henry Seymour
C Knowles, Lees
C Lawrence, William F.
L Leese, Joseph F. (Accrington)
O L Lefevre, Right Hon. George Shaw
C Lloyd, Wilson (Wednesbury)
O L Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
C Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
C Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
C Long, Walter (Liverpool)
C Lowther, Right Hon. James (Kent)
C Lowther, Jas. W. (Cumberland)
C Loyd, Colonel (Chatham)
U Lubbock, Right Hon. Sir John
L Lyell, Sir Leonard
C Macdonald, John Cumming
L McEwan, William
N McHugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
U Martin, Richard Biddulph
L Moorsom, James Marshall
U More, Robert Jasper
C Morgan, Hon. Frederick (Monmouthshire)
O L Morley, Right Hon. Arnold (Notts)
C Mount, William George
C Mowbray, Right Hon. Sir J. (Oxford University)
C Mowbray, R. G. C. (Lancashire, S.E.)

C Mulholland, Hon. Henry Lyle
C Murray, Andrew Graham (Bute)
N O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
C O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
L Palmer, George William (Reading)
L Paulton, James Mellor
C Pearson, Sir C. J. (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's)
C Penn, John
C Pierpoint, Robert
C Plunket, Right Hon. D. R. (Dublin University)
C Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
U Ramsay, Hon. Charles Maule
C Rankin James
C Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
O L Reid, Sir Robert T. (Dumfries)
O L Robertson, Edmund
C Robinson, Brooke (Dudley)
L Roby, Henry John
L Roscoe, Sir H. Enfield
O L Russell, George W. Erskine (Beds.)
C Sandys, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Myles
L Shaw, William Rawson (Halifax)
C Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
C Sidebottom, T. Harrop (Stalybridge)
C Sidebottom, William (Derbyshire)
L Sinclair, Captain John
U Smith, James Parker (Lanarkshire)
L Spicer, Albert

C Stanley, Edward James (Somerset)
L Stern, Sydney James
L Strachey, Edward
C Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
C Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
C Talbot, John G. (Oxford University)
C Temple, Sir Richard
L Tennant, Harold John
C Thornton, Percy M.
C Tomlinson, William Edward Murray
C Valentia, Viscount
C Vincent, Colonel Charles E. Howard
L Wallace, Robert (Edinburgh)
C Walrond, Sir William Hood
L Wason, Eugene
C Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
C Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
C Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
L Whitbread, S. Howard (South Beds.)
C Whitmore, Charles Algernon
C Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
C Wilson-Todd, William H. (Yorkshire)
U Wodehouse, Edmond Robert
C Wolf, Gustav Wilhelm
O L Woodall, William
C Wrightson, Thomas
C Wroughton, Philip

Tellers for the Ayes.—*O L* Mr. Thomas Ellis
 and *O L* Mr. Causton.

NOES.—FOR THE MOTION.

N Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
L Atherley-Jones, L.
L Benn, John Williams
L Bennett, Joseph
L Byles, William Pollard
L Caine, William Sproston
L Channing, Francis Allston
U Corbett, Archibald Cameron
L Cremer, William Randal
L Crosfield, William
N Curran, Thomas (Sligo, South)
N Diamond, Charles
L Edwards, Frank
L Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
L Everett, Robert Lacey
L Fry, Sir Theodore (Darlington)
N Gilhooly, James
L Gourley, Edward Temperley
L Hoare, Hugh Edward (Cambridgeshire)
C Howard, Joseph
C Hughes, Colonel Edwin
L Jacoby, James Alfred
N Jordan, Jeremiah
L Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumberland)
L Leng, Sir John
L Little, Thomas Shepherd
L Lloyd-George, David
L Macdonald, J. A. M. (Bow)
N MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
N McGilligan, Patrick
L McLaren, Walter S.^rB. (Cheshire)
N Mandeville, J. Francis
L Naoroji, Dadabhai
N O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
L Oldroyd, Mark
L Paul, Herbert Woodfield
L Pease, Henry Fell (Yorkshire, R.) N.
L Pease, Joseph A. (Northumberland)

L Pickersgill, Edward Hare
L Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
L Roberts, John H. (Denbighshire)
L Roe, Sir Thomas
L Smith, Clarence (Hull, East)
L Smith, Samuel (Flint)
C Stephens, Henry Charles
L Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
N Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
N Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
N Tanner, Charles Kearns
L Townsend, Charles
N Tully, Jasper
L Wayman, Thomas
N Webb, Alfred
L Wedderburn, Sir William
L Weir, James Galloway
L Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
L Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
L Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
L Wilson, John (Lanark)

Tellers for the Noes.—*L* Sir Joseph Pease and
L Mr. John Ellis.

		For the Motion (including Tellers.)	Against the Motion (including Tellers.)
Liberals (non-official)	...	43	31
Liberals (official)	0	23
Nationalists	...	14	3
Totalsupporters of Government	57		57
Conservatives	...	3	106
Liberal Unionists	...	1	15
Parnellites	0	0
Total	...	61	178

MR. WILSON'S REPLY TO MR. FOWLER.

At the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, held at Westminster Town Hall, Friday, 31st May, 1895, SIR JOSEPH PEASE, BART., M.P., presiding, the following address was delivered by MR. HENRY J. WILSON, M.P.

MR. H. J. WILSON: It has been suggested to me, and the suggestion commends itself very much to me, that inasmuch as on Friday night last, neither I nor any other Member of the anti-opium Party, had any opportunity of answering the somewhat remarkable speech delivered by Mr. Fowler in the House of Commons, perhaps the best thing I can do is, to endeavour to put before this audience some of the things that I should have liked to say, had time permitted, in answer to Mr. Fowler's speech. Therefore, instead of attempting to make an orderly speech upon the matter as it might present itself in an essay, I propose to take up, as well as I can, some of the points that Mr. Fowler made, and, as far as time permits, to say what I have to say in reply to those remarks of his.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATE.

In that Debate, our Chairman of to-night, Sir Joseph Pease, made a very able speech covering a great deal of ground—many points that he has put before us now and many others which he has not had time to put before us

now—including the somewhat peculiar action of the authorities and something of the rather peculiar action of the Commission. He was followed by our friend and colleague, Mr. John Ellis, who did not deal with the question of opium at large, but confined himself to two points—the peculiar action of the authorities of India, and some remarkable incidents connected with the management of the Commission itself and its proceedings and its Report. It was my duty while I was in India, and it has been my duty in the minority Report which I have presented, to make some rather strong comments on the proceedings of the authorities, and it was to me a very great source of satisfaction last Friday night to hear from two clear-headed men of business like Sir Joseph Pease and Mr. John Ellis, who have looked into the matter and read what there is in the evidence upon the subject, that my action in making those protests was supported and vindicated by them in the very able manner that it was on Friday.

Mr. Fowler made a very impassioned speech. He appeared to be angry, and men do not always speak best when they are very angry. In some parts he was

very self-contradictory. He was not consistent throughout, but he "tore a passion to tatters" in very good style, and he appeared to produce a certain impression upon the people who knew nothing at all about it. It was my duty to get up as soon as he had done, but the Speaker called upon Mr. Mowbray, one of the other Commissioners, because, I suppose, as we had had two speakers he thought that there ought to be two on the other side, and Mr. Mowbray spoke until it was Two minutes to Twelve o'clock. By the rules of the House the Debate has to stop at Twelve, and, therefore, I had only time to say that almost everything that Mr. Fowler had said could be satisfactorily replied to, when Sir Richard Temple got up and moved that the question be now put. That is what we call the Closure. The Speaker took no notice of that, and I got another minute to say that the one chief thing that we desired to know was, what action the Government intended to take in reference to this matter of smoking, with regard to the evils of which the evidence in India was practically unanimous, and with regard to which the nine Commissioners were unanimous. By this time it was Twelve o'clock, when Mr. Darling got up and moved the Closure again. The Debate would have had to stop in any case; and that was all that I had time to say.

I now want to say what I should have liked to say then. I shall have to refer to some of the things which Mr. Fowler said, and, if time permits, I shall also have to refer to some of the things that he did not say, because they were equally remarkable and equally important.

MR. FOWLER'S MISTAKES.

Of course Mr. Fowler is an extremely able man. No man is a better debater; no man is a readier speaker; no man has a greater command of facts, when he has mastered them, than Mr. Fowler. The number of curious mistakes he fell into, and the general tone of his speech, satisfy me that he did not make the speech at all himself. It was evidently made for him by somebody else, and I think, if necessary, I could probably put my hand on the man that made it for him.

I will not stop now to deal with those mistakes, except to say that he got wrong about his dates* as to when the Commission left off in London and when it began in India. He got wrong about the dates of the presentation of the Report. He got wrong about the Report being presented in print.

THE CHARGE OF PREMATURE ACTION.

Then he made a most extraordinary charge against my friend, Sir Joseph Pease (and others who were responsible for it), that they had brought this matter on prematurely, they had not given time for its due consideration. Why, we all knew—and nobody knew better than Mr. Fowler—that if we had not got a Debate then, we should never have got it at all this Session, because the Government would take all the time of the House after Whitsuntide. It was now or never. It was very fortunate that we were able to get it. I have no doubt it was too soon for him, and for some other people; but it was not too soon to put the facts before the country.

COMPLAINT OF NOT HAVING READ THROUGH THE EVIDENCE.

Then he complained that Sir Joseph Pease and Mr. Ellis had no right to make these speeches, and had no right to make the complaints that they did, until they had read the whole of the 2,000 pages of evidence. But in almost the next sentence he admitted that he had not read it himself, and yet he was perfectly satisfied that the Report was right. A little farther on he said again that he had not read it, that the House had not read it, and that what he wanted was an investigation. Well, I think, Mr. Chairman, we may say that that is just what we want. We want investigation, and that the matter be fully gone into; and the more it is gone into the more will our side be vindicated. *The Times* newspaper the next morning was not very kind to him, because it

* The mistakes here referred to do not appear in the Official Report, as reproduced above, having evidently been corrected in revision.—ED.

emphasised his remark about not having read the Report, and used these words :

"Though Mr. Fowler admits that he has not thoroughly mastered the mass of evidence * * * he defended the conclusions of the Report":

so there is no doubt that he did so. You will observe that one man may steal a horse and another man may not look over the hedge. Sir Joseph Pease may not make a speech unless he has read 2,000 pages right through, but Mr. Fowler is perfectly satisfied when he practically has not read any of it at all. He went on to say he was astonished that the Mover and the Seconder of the Resolution remained unconvinced in face of this overwhelming mass of evidence. This was the "overwhelming mass" that he had not read himself. Yet he was surprised that those who had looked into it remained unconvinced.

THE CHURCHES OF ENGLAND AND ROME ON OPIUM.

He went on to say, after some other remarks, that the Church of England and the Church of Rome did not take the same view of this matter that the Nonconformist churches did. Well, I wish very much that he had had time to tell us how he proved that proposition. I should like to know whether he knows, what I daresay Dr. Muirhead will tell us by and by* that in China, which, as Sir Joseph Pease said, is the main object of our attack, the three Bishops, and practically the whole of the missionaries of the Church of England in China, have joined with the missionaries of all other denominations in denouncing this opium business in China. I should like to hear whether he knew, and how he would have dealt with the fact, that the Church of Rome has continually issued fulminations and prohibitions, and has done it up to a very recent date, and, no more than any other Christian Church, will have opium smokers admitted to that Church. Why did he not tell us that, instead of saying that the Church of Rome

and the Church of England did not take the same view? As a matter of fact, he was falling back on and referring to certain memorials that were sent to the Commission, one in Calcutta, and another from Lucknow, from the Bishop and Clergy of Calcutta and the Bishop and Clergy of Lucknow. He rather mixed them up in a confused way, and he attached a degree of importance to them that they did not really bear, because they did not support the proposition for which the majority of my colleagues on the Commission adduced them, and neither do they support what Mr. Fowler used them for. It has been stated over and over again, and I believe it is perfectly true, that the use of opium is an enormous hindrance to Christian missions in China. It has never been put very prominently or authoritatively forward that the use of opium was an immense hindrance to missions in India, and how Mr. Fowler can imagine that the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Calcutta, because he does not think that it does much harm in Calcutta, can prove that it does not do much harm in China, is a thing which passes my comprehension, and I should like to have him explain it a little farther. These memorials to which he referred are very carefully prepared documents. They are worded with studious care. They do not support what they were intended to support, because if you read them carefully they have avoided saying the things they are supposed to be quoted for; and the English Bishop of Calcutta would have done himself a good deal more credit if he had not thought himself too dignified to reply to a very good letter that Mr. Alexander wrote to him in reference to his memorial, but which I think he did not answer because it was practically unanswerable.

What did the Bishops and Clergy of Calcutta and Lucknow say? They admit the evils of opium, but they think that everybody ought to have liberty, and that you ought not to interfere with a person's liberty—I suppose to poison himself, if he likes to do it. Well, if they would carry that out fully and logically, one could perhaps understand it; but I do not think they would apply it to the sale of all poisons, and I do not think they would say that there should be great facilities to enable people to do

* The Rev. Dr. Muirhead, of Shanghai, the senior Protestant Missionary in China, was to be the next speaker.—Ed.

injury to themselves. I imagine that if those good gentlemen were in this country at this moment they would be strong opponents to any vigorous dealing with the drink traffic in this country, although a good many of us think that it is time that there was some very vigorous dealing with it.

HOW MISSIONARIES WERE TREATED.

Then Mr. Fowler said that he admitted that there was strong evidence on the other side, but he said that what he was pleading for was investigation ; and yet he denounced Sir Joseph Pease and Mr. Ellis for trying to point out that the majority Report is not fairly based on the evidence that was presented to the Commission. Take this matter of missionaries. Reference has been made by Sir Joseph Pease to the way in which the Commission dealt with missionaries. The two classes of persons whom the majority of my colleagues appear to think entirely unreliable are temperance men on the one side and missionaries on the other. They were all so prejudiced and bigoted that you must not take any notice of them. You must put them aside. I want to give you a specimen of the way in which that was dealt with, and then I must leave it. It is a striking specimen, but it is one of the shortest. Some of the others would take longer to explain. There were two missionaries who gave evidence before us at Ajmere. They are referred to in the Report without their names, so that you cannot look them out in the index. They are referred to as belonging to "The Methodist Episcopal Mission, an American Body." Of course, the meaning which is conveyed to every ordinary person by that phrase is that they are Americans who have come across from America to evangelise India, and who do not know much about the country ; that they are not even British subjects, but Americans. What is the fact ? The fact is that these two gentlemen, Mr. Plomer and Mr. De Souza, are both of them natives of India, born there and brought up there, and they know the country and the habits of the people as nobody who has lately gone there can possibly know them. I say it is not fair treatment to refer in this

way to these missionaries as Americans. And then just below that, close to the same passage, a gentleman is associated with these missionaries, a Mr. Drew ; his name is not given, but he is described as "a European shopkeeper from Mhow." He is dismissed as "a shopkeeper." I suppose that a shopkeeper need not have more attention paid to him than a missionary or a temperance man has ; but, as a matter of fact, there was no evidence to show that Mr. Drew is a shopkeeper at all. He is an ice manufacturer. There is a good deal of ice manufactured in India, and he came and gave this valuable evidence,—that he has thirty-five or forty men employed, and they go out to the jungle to cut wood to bring in as fuel for his ice factory. These men go with their bullock carts, and if any of these men, except four, want an advance of a hundred rupees in order to refurnish themselves with bullocks and carts, he would lend them the hundred rupees and be satisfied that he would get his money again. But four out of these men are opium eaters, and their conduct is so unsatisfactory, they are so unreliable, so shifty and unbusinesslike, that he said he would on no account trust the opium eaters with more than fifteen rupees, while he would lend the others a hundred rupees. Well, this is the man who is dismissed in these contemptuous terms as a shopkeeper at Mhow, and his evidence is not, of course, given. He is just pushed aside in this summary fashion.

THE BALANCE OF MEDICAL EVIDENCE.

Then Mr. Fowler said in his speech that there were 146 medical men who gave evidence ; and he is reported to have used these words : "20 were against the use of opium ; and 126 were the other way." Well, that means one of two things. If he meant that there were twenty medical men who did not believe in opium as a useful drug in cases of disease, I am very much astonished to hear it, because I do not believe that there are twenty medical men in India or anywhere else who do not recognise the value of opium as a drug. If he did not mean that, I presume that he did mean to convey the impression that

out of the 146 there were only 20 who were opposed to the common use of opium as it is now used by many persons in India, and that the other 126 were the other way. If that is what he meant to say, I say that it is a gross perversion of the actual facts, which I am certain Mr. Fowler would not have made if he had gone into it for himself, and if it had not been supplied to him by somebody else. Our good friend, Mr. Joshua Rowntree, in his pamphlet, which everybody ought to have as it only costs a shilling, and which everybody who cares about this subject ought to study,* on page 41 gives an analysis of the medical men who give evidence, and you will find that Mr. Fowler is in this respect, as in some others, absolutely and entirely wrong.

OPIUM AS A PROPHYLACTIC AGAINST MALARIA.

Now on this medical question, what was the great point of contention about opium in connection with medical matters in India? There is a great deal of malarial fever in India. It affects people particularly in damp districts, but prevails more or less in all parts, I believe. But the damp districts and the jungles are particularly given to this malarial fever; and a considerable number of doctors in Calcutta, official doctors, army doctors, conveyed the impression to the Commission that opium was a very valuable preventive or prophylactic for this malarial fever, and that the natives had a firm belief in it and took it very extensively for the purpose of warding off the attacks of this fever. Sir Joseph Pease in his speech made some reference to this, which Mr. Fowler did not reply to. I wish very much that he had replied. Now, what are the facts about this use of opium for malarial fever? The facts are that, until comparatively lately, nobody had ever heard of its being used for this

purpose. As far as I am able to form an opinion, it is a doctrine invented of late years. This doctrine has been strongly pushed since it became necessary to produce some fresh argument to bolster up the opium traffic. There was this curious thing. Some of these very men who came and gave the strongest evidence on this subject in reference to its value did not use it themselves. They did not recommend it to their own patients. They say, "It is an excellent thing," but when they are asked, "Do you use it or recommend it?" they say, "No." And another thing is very remarkable, that a great many other doctors, and a great many natives of India, and a great many missionaries, say that they never heard of its being used for such a purpose; that the people do not use it for this purpose; that in vast districts, and some of the most malarious districts of India, the thing has never been heard of until lately. I could give you case after case, but it really comes to this—that a great many of those doctors who recommend it never use it, and that other doctors deny altogether that it has this property, and say that it is scientifically wrong and impossible that it could have this kind of property of warding off malarial fever. It is not in the nature of the stuff to do it. Quite a large number of witnesses agree in saying that the natives have no belief in it in that way.

But there is other evidence as to its uselessness. Sir Joseph Pease has given you one from the Government of Madras, showing that they were trying to wean people from the use of opium. But here is another. I do not know how many lists of questions the authorities in India issued to their subordinates and to other people in reference to our Commission and in reference to the kind of evidence that they were to give, but we have in these Blue Books proof that at least three sets of questions were issued in three different provinces; and if this opium is so important for malaria for warding off this disagreeable and painful disease from the people, one would think that that would be a particularly prominent question which would be put, and upon which they would want evidence. In one of the three sets of questions for one province there is a slight passing incidental reference to malaria as to whether it has any effect. In the other

* "The Opium Habit in the East: a Study of the Evidence given to the Royal Commission on Opium." 2nd edition, price 6d. paper wrappers, 1s. cloth boards. London: P. S. King & Son, 12 King Street, Westminster. May also be obtained from the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, Finsbury House, Blomfield Street, E.C.

two provinces there is not the slightest allusion to malaria. Not the slightest allusion. And yet we are expected to believe that the people would hardly be able to exist if it were not for this opium. So they told us in reference to Assam. The Commissioner of Excise in Assam came and gave us the strongest evidence that whole tracts would be "depopulated" by malaria if they could not get opium; and the natives of Assam came and said, on the contrary, that it was the opium that was killing the people, and they wished that they were rid of it; they were a great deal worse off with it than they were without it. There was this other very striking thing, which occurred over and over again. Witness after witness was brought forward by the Government, and came and gave all sorts of evidence in favour of opium, and when he had finished I put the question :—

"Will you tell me this. Is it a good thing for a young man in health to take opium?"

And with one accord they said, almost indignantly—

"No, why should he? If he has nothing the matter with him why should he take opium?"

Do you not think that if he was exposed to attacks of malarial fever it would be a good thing to take as a preventive, whether he was in health or not? But there was scarcely one of them that believed anything of the kind.

But the most striking evidence, perhaps, is that of Sir William Roberts, the Medical Commissioner. He labours through this malarial question, and through this use of opium, for two or three pages, and then at the end sums up the whole business practically by saying that the difficulty about it is this, that you cannot produce much effect with opium in cases of fever for this purpose, unless you give such doses that you are in very serious danger of killing your patients off-hand. Well, when a prominent man like Sir William Roberts, trying to make out the best case he can, is obliged to come to that point, I think it does not amount to much.

I want to give you one bit of evidence (I cannot stop to give you half) from these books in reference to a well-known

and distinguished Indian medical man, Rai Lal Madhub Mookerjee, Bahadur, L.M.S. He is a very prominent man in Calcutta, and a Presidency Magistrate. He was the first Indian President of the Calcutta Medical School. When he received this title of honour on account of his character and services, he was presented with a sword, and Sir Charles Elliot, the Governor of Bengal, in making the presentation to him, said that—

"In Dr. Lal Madhub Mookerjee the whole profession of medicine is honoured."

And this gentleman is entirely free from any taint whatever of connection with the missionaries, because he is described as "a Hindoo of Hindoos, and a Brahmin of Brahmins," so that he cannot be found fault with on missionary grounds.

I put this question to him :—

(8824.) "We have had a great deal of discussion in this room as to whether opium is or is not a preventive or prophylactic as against fever: will you tell us your view on that subject?"

And this is his reply :—

"It is to my mind a new theory. Since the opium question has been discussed among the Indian public I have heard of such a theory being propounded, but it is not a theory that I knew of while I was a student of medicine or as a practitioner in medicine for so many years."

Then I said :—

(8825.) "You mean it is a new theory to urge that opium is a prophylactic against fever?—That is my view." (8826.) "You were not taught that at college?—No." (8827.) "Have you heard of its being taught in college?—No." (8828.) "Can you tell us whether the medical works with which you are acquainted recommend or whether any medical work recommends opium for that purpose?"

And he mentioned one, the latest book then published, "Hygiene and Diseases in Warm Climates," in which he said that it was dismissed in two lines by saying :—

"It is doubtful if the habit of opium-eating tends to increase the liability to or the danger of the disease."

This latest book says that there is even a risk that it may increase the liability to the disease.

"Some even hold it to be a prophylactic."

Then I put further questions to him :—

(8830.) "You have spoken of the use of opium as a prophylactic against malaria: can you tell us anything of its use as a remedy in cases of fever?" (that is, when the disease has actually come).

He said :—

"I do not think it is a remedy for fever." (8831.) "Do you say that that is also a new doctrine?—I do not believe it; I do not think it is a remedy in fever." (8832.) "Do you think it is commonly used as a remedy in fever?"

And he said it was not. Then I put this question to him :—

(8836.) "Probably you do not know whether these gentlemen" (those who had been giving evidence before us) "in their lectures in the college in Calcutta, use opium as a prophylactic?"

and he said :—

"I have had consultation practice with nearly all of them, and in my consultation with them, and from the information that we generally get by exchange in medical intercourse, I have never heard that they have prescribed opium as a medicine, or as a prophylactic for malaria."

I might give you a great deal more of that. I have them here, case after case; a dozen cases are here, and there are scores of them in these Blue Books. Here is another eminent man, Nil Ratan Sircar, M.A., M.D., Lecturer on Forensic Medicine in the Calcutta Medical School. He is a native of the district, and has relatives and friends in Eastern Bengal. He was asked :—

(5836) "What do you say in regard to any popular opinion as to opium being a protection against ever?"

He says :—

"I do not think that the public have the idea that opium is a protection against fever." (5837) "Do you think that it is?—No, I do not. There is no evidence to prove the supposed prophylactic action of opium against fever." (5838) "Is the use of opium specially useful in malarious districts?—I do not think it has ever been used as a useful medicine in malarious districts, either as a prophylactic against fever, or as an anti-periodic in the course of the fever."

I might go on with case after case of these men, some of them, you must bear in mind, who really were called as pro-opium witnesses—that is to say, they had no particular objection—no conscientious objection, to the use of opium. They thought it might do good in some

ways, but they distinctly disclaimed the idea that it was useful for this particular and special purpose. I must mention this one. There was a Surgeon-Colonel Cleghorn; he is a great man—the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals in the Punjab, and I call him a distinctly pro-opium witness, and he had never used opium as a prophylactic, and never heard of it as a prophylactic. He said that quinine was much better. A doctor from a native State, Dr. Jagannath, medical officer to His Highness the Maharaja of Cashmere, who was educated in the Lahore Medical School, said :—

(17508) "I have never seen that opium has anything to do with malarial fevers, or anything of the sort; I never tried it."

Here is the Assistant-Surgeon to His Excellency, the Viceroy, when he goes to Poona. You would think that the Viceroy ought to have the best attention. He says (26041) that :—

"It [Opium] does not seem to be used as a prophylactic for any disease in the district of Poona."

And they go on making these statements, till I think that we may dismiss opium as a prophylactic against fever.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have taken some pains upon that, because this malarial fever theory is the sheet anchor of our opponents. They say that it would be an act of gross cruelty to deprive the poor people of opium, which is their "only remedy." We do not want to deprive them of any remedy at all. What we want to deprive them of is the habitual use of a drug which does them a great deal of harm when they are well and have nothing the matter with them.

HOW THE SALE OF OPIUM IN INDIA SHOULD BE RESTRICTED.

Then Mr. Fowler said, in dealing with this question of prohibition, that it was impossible to carry out the ideas of the Anti-Opium Society as to prohibiting the use of opium except for medical purposes, because how could you make an exception. He said—

"The Commission go on to show that the idea of medical exception is an absolute impossibility. Where are you to draw the line between medical consumption and general consumption?"

Well, what does the Anti-opium Society ask for? The only thing it has ever asked for is that opium should be put upon the same footing in India as in this country; that it should be sold by competent, responsible persons, and that it should, as the Maharaja of Darbhanga himself recommends, be labelled "Poison" and sold under the greatest care; and it does seem to me to be perfectly absurd for Mr. Fowler to set up a man of straw of that kind for the purpose of knocking him down again. He might tell us that because it is not possible for any of us to make our houses absolutely proof against skilled burglars with all their tools and appliances, we must leave the windows and doors open and not lock the front door at night. To say that, because you cannot have a perfect system, it is of no use to do anything, appears to me to be downright trifling with our common sense. It is very important to bear in mind what was said by the Maharaja of Darbhanga and Mr. Haridas, who know the habits of their people. The one recommends that it should be sold labelled "Poison," and that the minimum fatal dose should be printed in the vernacular upon every bottle and package of it that is sold; and Mr. Haridas scorns the idea that there are not plenty of people in India who are far more fit to be trusted with a discretionary power than what he calls "the common ignorant opium farmers or vendors." I have suggested—and these Indian gentlemen agree with me—that if the Government is not prepared, or until the Government is prepared, to make a sweeping change altogether, and restrict the sale to medical purposes by placing it entirely in the hands of official persons with a certain discretionary power, they might at least introduce some form of local option. Whether on the part of the people, or whether on the part of the local government or of the municipal boards or district boards or otherwise, I do not undertake to say. That is for those who are better acquainted with the circumstances. But some provision might be made, so that in the various localities where there is some public feeling against the common use of opium, the people should be able to protect themselves against it, and should not have the thing thrust upon

them where they do not want it, to the injury of themselves and their families.

MR. FOWLER'S AGREEMENT WITH MR. ELLIS'S CRITICISMS.

Well, there was one bit of comfort in Mr. Fowler's speech which we should not forget. My friend Mr. Ellis had referred to a number of cases of improper action on the part of the Commission and on the part of the Government. He had shown how badly they had behaved, and how the evidence was what I call "filtered"—prepared, arranged, and some of it suppressed; and, referring to that, Mr. Fowler said that he was acquainted with these cases to which reference had been made, and that he agreed with a great deal of what Mr. Ellis had said. Now, it is very important to have a Secretary of State saying that he agrees with a great deal of these very severe criticisms that have been made as to the way in which the matter was managed; and, so far as it goes, he disagrees with the Commission, because he does not appear to be quite so entirely at the mercy of the Indian officials as the Commissioners were. I hope that in his responsible position as Secretary for India he will take up this question, and take care that in any future Commissions—the Commission on Expenditure or any other Commission—the same tampering with the evidence is not permitted as was permitted in the case of our Commission.

OPIMUM AND ALCOHOL.

Then Mr. Fowler followed the Report of the majority into discussion about the relative effects of opium and alcohol. This comparison was raised by various members of the Commission over and over again. I never could see exactly what we had to do with it. There is not a word about alcohol in the Queen's Commission that sent us there. We were not told to inquire as to what was the greatest curse in India. We were told to inquire into the circumstances of opium and the practice of using opium; and to be continually dragging up the question about alcohol was rather like dragging a red herring

across the trail. But then, so far as it went, I think that perhaps, after all, it will do some good, because so much attention was directed to the evils of alcohol in India that I do not understand how Her Majesty's Government, if they accept this Report and swallow it whole, can help doing something to put a stop to some of the evils of alcohol in India. In the Report of the majority there are one or two references to this question of alcohol, and they seem to me to be entirely beside the mark, because, as a matter of fact, whether we are abstainers or not, we know that in this country the great bulk of the people, the great majority in this country, are in the habit of consuming alcoholic liquor in some form or other on certain occasions, more or less. There can be no question about that. You may say broadly that England is very much a nation of drinkers, and you may say with equal truth that India is, broadly speaking, a nation or a number of nations who are, for the most part, abstainers from the use of opium. Averaging one part with another, the most enthusiastic pro-opiumist cannot claim that in India there is more than 4 per cent., at most, of the population using opium at all in the way that we should object to; whereas, in this country, I do not think the most enthusiastic of us teetotallers claim more than 7 per cent. that are abstainers; so that if those two statements are correct you have in the one case a nation here 93 per cent. of whom are drinkers, and there a nation 96 per cent. of whom are abstainers from opium, and I entirely object to all these analogies between the two as to which is really the worse. I think it is quite possible, and I am quite willing to believe, that drink is the more injurious in India. It is more novel to them, and it is said by a great many people to be doing the most harm. Suppose we grant that, are we then to refuse to get rid of one curse because there is another that is greater? Are we to wait to deal with one because there is something else that is worse? I do not see the necessity. Bishop Thoburn dealt with this matter very well. He belongs to the American Episcopal Church, and he is a grand and admirable man. He was asked which he thought more objectionable. He said both were bad, and he used this illustration. He mentioned two kinds of deadly

snakes in India, and he said that it would make very little difference to him which was chosen; he very much objected to be killed by a bite from either of them. That is a sufficient answer to the question which is the worse, in a question of this kind. I am very sorry, I confess, that Mr. Fowler went so far out of his way to raise this question. He dealt with this drink question as if we could do nothing in India until we had dealt with drink in this country. You must bear in mind that the Indian people by their religions are abstainers. The Hindoo religion, the Mahometan religion, and the Buddhist religion all teach them to do without drink. They all object to alcohol. Therefore why should Mr. Fowler be so afraid that if they give up opium they will take to drink, when it is against all their religions? It seems to me a shocking thing that we should be pressing the use of this opium, which is against those religions which we regard, and rightly regard, as so much worse than ours, and I am very sorry that a man of Mr. Fowler's calibre, and a man of his past history should not only altogether puff aside, as he seems to have done, the "Nonconformist conscience" of this country, but that he is willing to puff aside the Hindoo conscience, the Mahometan conscience, and the Buddhist conscience, so that there will be nothing left presently but the India Office conscience, and that seems to me to be rather a microscopic quantity.

THE POPPY CULTIVATION.

Mr. Fowler went on to refer to the question of the prohibition of cultivation. They are very fond of talking about the great cruelty and hardship it would be to make these little cultivators give up cultivating opium. But opium in British India is only cultivated in two districts of comparatively limited size. Throughout the whole of the rest of India it has been prohibited already in successive stages. It has been crushed out in one place after another, and we have not heard a word about the poor cultivators all these years. We have not had any appeals to our pity and sympathy for these wretched people who have been prevented from cultivating it. As long as it was for revenue, it was all right to

crush it down. The moment it is a question of morality, they say, "Look at all these poor people whom you are going to deprive of their living." I do not see much philosophy in that. As the Chairman has told us, many of these people do not want to cultivate it. They have to have an army of inspectors over them to make them cultivate. They shake them, when they do not cultivate it, and they pull up their other crops by way of punishment to make them cultivate opium. It is the greatest rubbish and nonsense in the world to talk about all the people being anxious to cultivate it. No doubt in some places it pays very well, but there are other places where it does not pay. Indian evidence shows how 10 years ago the Government recognised in formal documents that the poppy from which the opium is made was not a popular crop. They admit in those documents that it had once been a popular crop, but that railways and other means of communication and various circumstances had deprived it of that character, and that they must take certain steps and do something to make it popular. But they had not done anything to make it more popular, and the people came before us and petitioned us and told us that they did not want to do it. There is a gentleman on this platform, Mr. Jones, of Patna, who is going to address us by and by, and he gave us most valuable assistance and got for us most valuable information upon this very subject, as to how these people are oppressed and harried to cultivate this poppy when they do not wish to do so. My own son, hearing of one case, went to investigate it. It was a case in which a man had had his potatoes pulled up as a kind of punishment on the part of the Opium Department for not having grown, as they thought, a sufficient quantity of opium. It was absolutely illegal. It had been denied to us over and over again by the officials that there was any compulsion or any kind of pressure, but there is no doubt about it. It was proved up to the hilt that a man had had his potatoes pulled up, when he had committed no offence whatever, even against the stringent rules that regulate the management of the Opium Department. Then Mr. Fowler said—"If you are going to stop it, how are you going to stop it? You will want an army of inspectors to stop it." But there is an

army of inspectors already to make them grow poppy. The Opium Department is engaged in looking after this business, from their miserable Zilladars who get about a 1s. a week, up to some of the highly placed European officials, who get a great deal more. There are already four of them to the square mile to look after the poppy cultivation. You can imagine a district a quarter of a square mile (that is half a mile on each side), and there is a man there who has nothing to do except to see that these people cultivate opium, and make them do it. They do not call it "compulsion," not at all. They call it "persuasion" and "inducement," but it is a kind of persuasion and inducement which, in this country, we should call compulsion; and there they are, this army of men, as thick on the ground as gamekeepers on a preserved English estate, making these poor people do what it is said they are so extremely anxious to do. And Mr. Fowler asked where was to be the limit put to the extortion and tyranny and oppression involved in putting down this cultivation. Well, I have said already that it is prohibited all over the rest of India. We have heard nothing about extortion and tyranny and oppression there, and we have got the tyranny and the oppression and the extortion already on the part of the lower officials. These officials all live, more or less, when they are going about the districts, upon these poor people. That was proved in evidence. A high Indian official, Mr. Wace, a very honest man (I am very glad to bear testimony to him), one of the best of the whole lot of official witnesses, came before us, and admitted that there was extortion going on, and said they did not know how to stop it. I remember hearing of it in Calcutta from a man who had been a poppy cultivator, and had been oppressed. He had suffered much, and he said that the head man of the village had to supply corn for the horses and food for the officials who came round, and then he used a very forcible expression. He said that the head man had to provide it, and "he squeezes it out of us."

I have not time to quote evidence in proof of how this pressure and this compulsion are used, but I have a list here of official after official who told us that

there was no compulsion ; and then we had the poor peasants themselves, who came and said that there was a great deal of compulsion.

I will give you, as a specimen, one case of the sort of evidence that we got. I do not say that it was all as bad as this. There was a Mr. Hopkins, the opium agent at Patna. He is the head of the department, which employs nearly two thousand persons. He told us how very valuable a crop it was, and said that it would pay to cultivate the poppy for its seed alone and the value of the manure it produces, even though they got nothing for the opium ; but he was flatly contradicted and absolutely laughed at by a whole roomful of officials, because he, at the head of the department, knew nothing at all about it, and there was not a single one of his subordinates who would back him up in that statement. Mr. Rivett Carnac had been for 18 years Opium Agent—a very high position. He has now retired from the service. He told us about the great advantages that there were in connection with the poppy crop, and he said that all these advantages combined to make the cultivation undoubtedly popular ; while we had all this mass of evidence to prove the contrary. Then comes a very striking fact, to which Sir Joseph Pease has already referred, that since we left India the authorities have raised the price paid to the cultivators from five rupees to six rupees per seer for this opium, which is said to be the most popular and profitable crop. Everybody knows that the finances of India are in an almost desperate condition, and that the authorities say they are obliged to economise at every turn. They say they cannot carry out many things which ought to be done because they have no money ; and here their highest officials say that this is a most popular and profitable crop, and they go and raise the price paid to the cultivator by 20 per cent. Now this means one of two things, from which it is impossible to get away. It means either that they have been guilty of the most profligate and wasteful expenditure, which I do not believe, or it means, what I do believe, that they know perfectly well that the evidence that was given by their most highly-placed officials was not true, and

because they want to keep up the opium cultivation they are obliged to raise the price 20 per cent. to make the people go on cultivating it at all.

COMPENSATION.

Again, they say that if the cultivation was stopped there would have to be enormous compensation paid to the cultivators. You do not need to pay a heavy compensation to the cultivators. You do not need to pay a heavy compensation to people for stopping them from growing a crop which they do not want to grow. What have they done with reference to compensation in other parts of India where the cultivation has been prohibited ? In no part of India has a penny of compensation ever been paid to anybody for compelling them to give up the cultivation of opium. It was not necessary to do it when it was only a question of revenue ; but when it becomes a question of morality and public policy, then this bugbear of compensation is used to try to frighten us out of it. I cannot pursue this any further ; I cannot take up the question of the Native States ; I cannot take up the question of Burma.

BURMA AN OBJECT-LESSON.

Mr. Fowler did not say anything about Burma, which is a most interesting subject. It ought to have separate treatment, and it would take some time to explain it fully. But I want to say this, that if the anti-opium movement in this country had never done anything except to get the conditions with regard to Burma somewhat ameliorated, it would not have existed in vain, and the money that has been given to this object could not possibly have been better spent.

MR. FOWLER'S OMISSIONS.

There are other things which Mr. Fowler said, which I pass over now. But what about the things which Mr. Fowler did not say ? He did not tell us of the terrible craving of the people—the frightful hold that this opium

has upon them. In that respect there is an immense difference between opium and drink. If you speak to a hundred men who are in the habit of taking alcohol in moderation, there is not one of them that would not be ashamed to say that he could not get on to-morrow without it ; but the men who are in the habit of taking opium, even in what would be called strict moderation, if they once get into the habit, must have it, or they will be useless and helpless till they get it. That is admitted on all hands, and there is no dispute about it. Mr. Fowler did not tell us anything about the question of the soldiers, to which Sir Joseph Pease has already referred, that although this opium is said to be necessary to enable men to endure fatigue and hardship, and to march long distances ; and although it is said that the native troops are so dependent upon it that they will mutiny and I do not know what, if we attempt to interfere with their use of opium, yet there is a condition in every opium licence that the shop is to be closed when the troops are passing by, or when they are encamped in the vicinity of the shop. This condition is not a mere dead letter, because in the columns of the Excise Report (I have seen it for the North-West Provinces, and no doubt it exists elsewhere) there is a column for payments made as compensation to the shopkeepers for closing their shops when the troops are near. So that, although it is said that the opium is a necessary of life, the men who keep the shops have to be compensated because they have not been allowed to sell their opium when the soldiers are going past. It seems to me perfectly absurd.

Mr. Fowler did not tell us one word about the question of smoking, or what the Government are going to do on that subject. He did not say one word about the China traffic, which has always been the main object of our attack. He did

not say one word about Lord Lansdowne's most improper and most unconstitutional interference with the Commission. He did not say why the memorials in favour of the traffic are quoted in the Report of the majority, and the memorials of the missionaries and others against opium are not quoted in that Report. He did not tell us why two witnesses were stopped from giving evidence about China, and an Indian official was allowed to write one hundred and fifty pages of large print upon the question of China. He did not tell us why these Indian officials were allowed to write these long appendices at all. He did not tell us why I was prevented by the Chairman of the Commission from taking a proper part in the discussion, when the Commission met to consider the Report, a matter to which Mr. Ellis made the most pointed and stinging reference. He did not say one word about the use of opium for promoting lustful and sensual practices in India, or about its still more common connection with impurity in the Straits Settlements, about which my friend Mr. Shellabear, who is in this audience, could tell us a great deal, if time permitted, and about which those admirable American ladies, Mrs. Andrew and Dr. Kate Bushnell, have told us so much that is horribly painful. He did not tell us any of these things ; but he did right in telling us that we must go on investigating the question for ourselves. We mean to go on investigating and letting people understand this question. We know very well that the whole of this opium business, whether in India or China, is injurious to man and dishonouring to God ; and, notwithstanding what Mr. Fowler and all his officials, and all or most of the newspapers may say, I trust that there will be a knot of people left in this country who will go on fighting this question in faith in God, and God will ultimately give us the victory.

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